THE ECONOMICS OF PEACE

THE CAUSE AND THE MAN

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SIXTIETH BIRTH-DAY SOUVENIR
PRESENTED TO
JOSEPH CORNELIUS KUMARAPPA

THE ECONOMICS OF PEACE

THE CAUSE AND THE MAN

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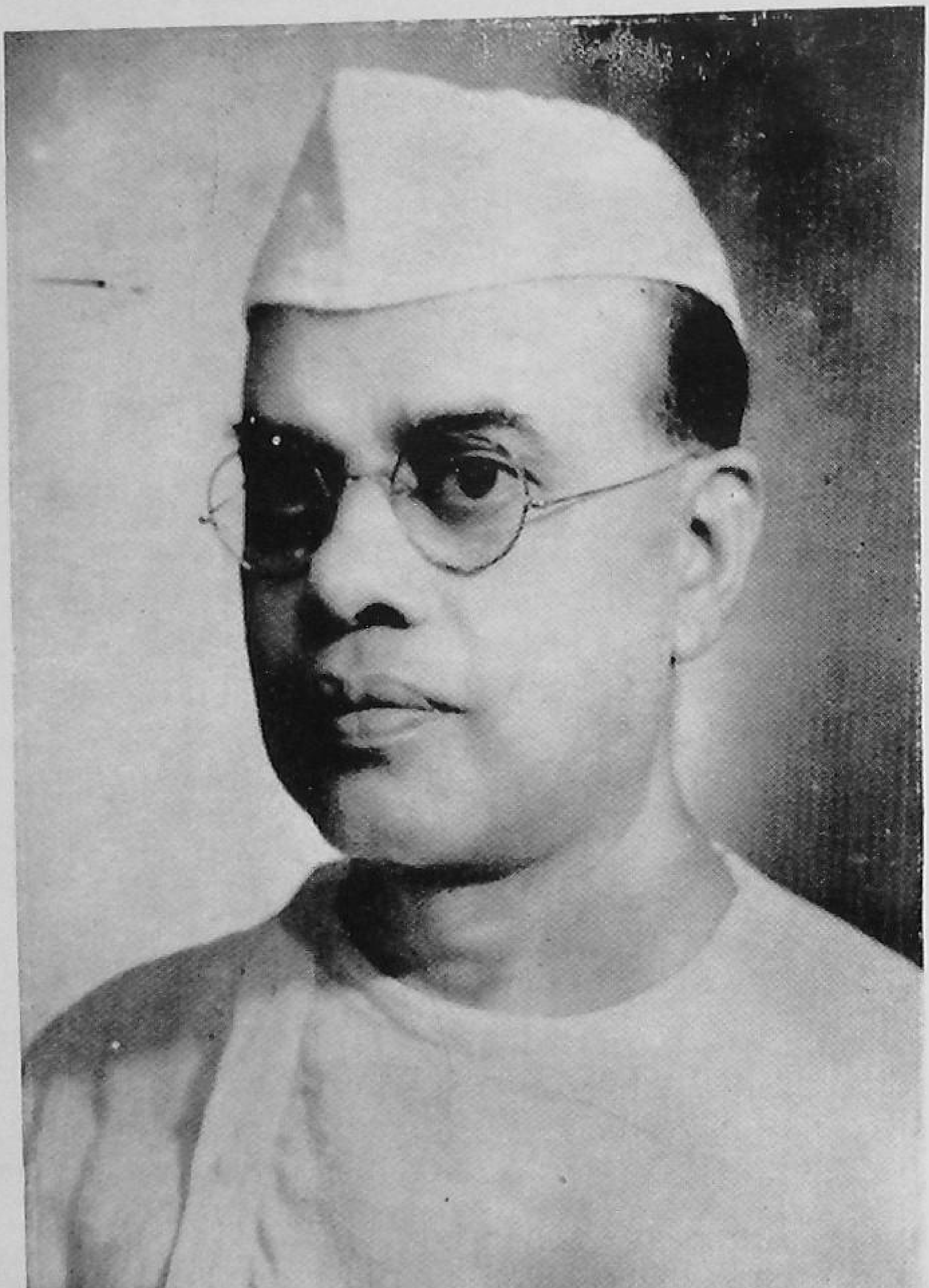

J. C. Kumarappa

FOREWORD

Readers of this Volume will, we doubt not, notice at once that, in bringing it out as a Souvenir of the 60th birthday of Shri J. C. Kumarappa, we have only availed ourselves of a happy occasion to produce a book of some permanent value to Constructive Workers in India and to Peace-Makers everywhere. We intended, not so much to sing the praises of a man, however significant and worthy, as to bring home to our readers the challenge of the Cause he has made his own—The Economics of Peace. The central teaching of Shri Kumarappa has been that production, buying and selling are not activities which can be considered in isolation as merely economic, but that every such activity involves moral and spiritual issues. And no activity can be moral or spiritual if it, in any way-involves the exploitation of any individual or group by another. At the root of all conflicts and wars will invariably be found some form or other of exploitation somewhere in the world. It is this teaching of Kumarappa, which we made it our object to elucidate in this Volume, through the contributions of the writers whom we canvassed.

The 'Biographical Sketches' seemed appropriate to add colour and tone to a subject which, however, could, certainly have stood on its own. We have deliberately made the 'Extracts from Speeches and Writings' extensive, in order to let Shri Kumarappa present his thesis in his own words of direct simplicity and power. In the chapters under 'Creative Revolution,' we have tried to give the readers a glimpse of the many-sided non-violent revolution in India under Mahatma Gandhi. The articles in the section, 'Light on Problems,' we trust, do throw real light on some of the fundamental economic problems of present day India. In the last few chapters, under 'Anecdotes and

Tributes,' we have brought together only such material as came spontaneously from co-workers and friends, without seeking to get formal messages from distinguished personalities. The latter, we felt, would not have been in tune with the mind of the man in whose honours, we are bringing out this Volume.

We take this opportunity to thank all our contributors, who found time in the midst of their heavy pre-occupations to help make this venture possible. Our special thanks are due to Shri G. Ravindra Varma, of the Gandhi Vichar Parishad, Wardha, who selected most of the extracts from Shri Kumarappa's writings and also looked through part of the proofs. We are also indebted to Shri Y. B. Joshi and Shri M. Vinaik of Maganvadi for helping with proof corrections. Our thanks are also due to Shri M. L. Saraswathy Bai for typing all the manuscripts speedily for the press. The Kakavadi Press did a good job of work, printing most of the book in record time; and so did the Shrikrishna Press with the last hundred pages. We render our thanks to them also.

May we say in conclusion, that we fully realize that we might have produced a Volume more worthy of the occasion, of the Cause and the Man; but we have had to race against time and to snatch the time needed for this work from other busy hours. Nevertheless, we venture to hope that the Volume makes some contribution to the understanding of the Economics of Peace in the modern world, and in that hope, we have great pleasure in offering it to the public on the occasion of the 60th birthday of the Man who has made the Cause supremely his own.

S. K. George,

G. Ramachandran

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PART ONE

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

I

BOYHOOD AND YOUTH

MRS. E. S. APPASAMY

Joseph Chelladurai was born in Tanjore to Mr. & Mrs. S. D. Cornelius on January 4, 1892. Though he was the ninth child to my parents he was very welcome. By the time he grew up my parents were rather old. My father was a Government servant in the Public Works Department. He was a very systematic, punctual, thrifty and public-spirited man and a good disciplinarian. My mother was a pious, saintly woman, very kind and charitable and always thoughtful of the poor. She attended not only to the household work but trained the children to be God-fearing and to be helpful and kind to the poor. She had daily prayers with them and taught them the scriptures. Whenever she read in the papers of famine or flood and suffering she would ask the children to give from their pocket money and also send them out to her friends to collect more, and thus she was able to send relief to some needy people, not only in India but in other countries also. Though my mother was not highly educated in the academic sense, yet she put into practice various methods for training her children. She would give us a chicken each and ask us to look after it and when it laid eggs we used to collect them care-

fully, sell them and give the money to charity. Thus we learnt calculation, caring for poultry and the joy of giving out of our own efforts. During Christmas holidays she would send us out with collecting cards. We collected money for the Sunday School Union. This gave us courage to meet new people and helped us to be fearless and trustful.

Joseph Chelladurai was called 'Chella' at home. He had a very enquiring mind and even when he was only a child he wanted to understand the why and wherefore of things. Once we were taken to Needamangalam for a picnic, where my father went on duty to visit the Cauvery anicut. As soon as we got off the train we were all busy to see if our luggage was safely taken off the compartment. We soon discovered that Chella, who was then only 3 or 4 years old, was missing and so we started searching for him and found him near the engine. When asked what he was doing there, he pointed to the engine and said he wanted to know how the machine worked. We often thought he would become an engineer, because he was so interested in the working of mechanical devices. His brothers were older than him by 5 and 7 years and they would often tease him. They would challenge him to hold out his hands and receive 20 strokes. He would take them without flinching or crying, to prove that he was fearless of pain. But he disliked cruelty and injustice towards the defenceless. When he was five years old he was sent to St. Joseph's School in Cuddalore. On the very first day he saw the teacher caning a boy and immediately he left the class crying. He could not bear to see the boy being punished. Even as a little boy he was very particular about being punctual. He would sit and do his home work in the mornings and if he was delayed in finishing it he would set off for school without even his breakfast, as he hated to be late. My father, who had then retired, used to help him, but often he would lose his patience and knock him on the head. So Chella would run to my mother for help, though she was busy in the kitchen. He would often ask her all sorts of queer questions which sometimes she could not answer.

When my father came back to Madras, Chella joined the Doveton European School for Boys. He was then 12 or 13 years old. My father was the Secretary of the Indian Christian Association and

also of the Indian Christian Provident Fund. My father would teach him how to keep accounts and Chella would help him in his clerical work. Once Chella had fixed up to meet a friend at the tennis club at 5-30 P. M. to play tennis with him. But when he got home from school father called him and said: "I want you to go to Town and get a chimney for the lamp." Chella said, "I cannot go today as I have already asked a friend to meet me at 5-30 P. M. and I must keep my promise." Father was furious and scolded him. Chella said: "Father, if you had told me earlier I would not have arranged to meet my friend today, but now I can go and get the chimney for you only tomorrow." So he went and played tennis and when he came home he went to mother and told her that father was very angry with him because he did not go to buy the chimney. Mother replied, "No, Chella, father is not angry but rather proud of you for keeping your appointment with your friend." Father remarked to me, "Look at the little fellow. How conscientious he is about keeping to his word! I wonder what he will be like when he grows up." When Chella was a young boy, mother used to send him out to distribute "Paliyar Nesan" and other religious magazines which she considered worthwhile. He used to collect the subscriptions and send the money to the editors.

My parents were very keen on giving us the best type of education. They sent my sister and me, when we were only 12 and 10 years of age, from Tanjore to Madras to study in the Presidency Training School. When we were older, they sent us to Poona, where they had heard of a good Girls' School, managed by the Sisters of Wantage. In these days (1893) it was rather rare to send girls away so far from home for study. Though mother needed our help badly in the home, she sent us at considerable expense all that distance. Later, when the boys grew up some friends spoke to my parents about education in U. S. A. and so they sent the boys to study there, one to study in an Arts College and the other for Medicine.

Before sending the boys abroad, father made it clear that he would spend only a limited amount of money on them and that they would have to earn the rest, paying back whatever they borrowed. My brothers were indeed very keen on going, and so they went and stayed abroad for 5 or 6 years. The Americans are very generous in helping students to work their way through college. They give the

students work which they can do in their spare hours, like polishing brass, taking care of tennis courts, attending telephone calls, waiting at table and so on, and the students are paid for their services. It helps the students not to despise manual labour and increases their self-respect. After my brothers returned to India and had settled down to work they paid back my father what he had spent on them, so that the younger brothers and sisters of the family could have the same opportunities of higher education. Later, they went abroad a second time on their own earnings and took higher degrees, like the Ph. D., after studying for a further period of two or more years. At this time they were married, and took their wives also abroad, so that they might have a wider outlook on life and learn from Western women that the home is not the only place where they need to serve, but that they should strive to work for others also.

When Chella grew up he passed his Matriculation from St. Paul's High School and joined the Wesleyan Mission College. He had been a scout while at school and his Scout Master, Mr. Howard Oakley, advised him to study accountancy. Mr. Oakley arranged for him to be apprenticed to Mr. Barnes of a well known firm of Incorporated Accountants in London in 1913. After five years he graduated and the firm asked him to be a partner in their concern in London. But my parents wanted him to return home. They did not believe in leaving wealth for their children, but in giving them a sound education which would make them self-reliant and useful. They gave equal opportunities to girls and boys for their development. Two of the girls took Medicine and became doctors, while two graduated in Arts. Three of the girls studied abroad. My parents were not keen on the early marriage of their children and so allowed them to work and earn their living until a suitable companion was found. They were against the dowry system and so no dowry was given or received during weddings. Ours was a big family of twelve children,—two boys died while they were young, but the rest grew up to be adults. My parents were both healthy and strong. They always lived, whenever possible, in houses with gardens, so that the children would have plenty of fresh air and space to play. We had simple but nourishing food. We were all healthy children and none of us suffered from any serious ailment. My mother's ideal was "Sacrifice

and Service", and she tried her best to instil this idea in every one of her children. During her life-time she was glad to see that some of them, who had finished their education, were walking in her footsteps, keeping her ideals before them. As we grow old and look back, we are filled with gratitude to God for having blessed us with such parents.

After his return to India, Chella joined an English firm and practised as an Accountant. In 1924 he joined Mr. Davar of the Davar's College of Commerce, Bombay. He left for U. S. A. in 1927 and took his B. Sc. degree in Syracuse, in Business Administration. In 1938 he took his M. A., in Columbia, and wrote a thesis on "Public Finance and Our Poverty", at the suggestion of his professor, Dr. E. R. A. Soligman. In the year 1929, after his return from America, Chella took the name of J. C. Kumarappa. Kumarappa was our Hindu family name. He sent his thesis to Gandhiji and asked for his opinion on it. Gandhiji then invited him to Sabarmati and said he would like to discuss it with him. Though my brother was dressed in Western style, Gandhiji with his keen perception, saw the inner workings of his mind and his longing to serve. Kaka Saheb Kalelkar, who was then the Vice-Chancellor of the Gujarat Vidyapith, felt J. C. Kumarappa would not be suitable for the kind of work in the villages that Gandhiji wanted him to do. At first Gandhiji asked him to be Professor of Economics in the Vidyapith and later he was asked to survey the villages in Matar Taluka, with a view to find out the economic status of the villagers. He gave up his lucrative post as an accountant and partner in Davar's College and accepted Gandhiji's invitation to join him in his great task of village work for the uplift of the poor. When I saw him in Sabarmati in 1932 it was indeed a very transformed Chella. He was dressed in Khadi, Gandhi cap and sandals. He gave up his luxurious habits and Western way of living and sat on the floor to eat a very simple meal. It surprised me greatly to see my brother so changed. I felt then that it was my mother's bringing up which helped him to change and sacrifice everything for his new ideals. We rejoiced that he was called to associate himself with the greatest man our country has produced and help him in his great work. Standing firm on Gandhiji's ideals he too had to go to jail three times for longer or

shorter periods. The last time he was in jail in 1945 he was extremely ill. The jail authorities had given up hope of his recovery and wired to us. Then two of us went immediately to Jubbalpore and found him very ill indeed; he was almost blue from weakness. The doctors said it was lack of proper nourishment. We immediately removed him from jail and when he started eating proper food he recovered his health slowly and eventually went back to Wardha to his work. Because of his overwork he suffers from high blood pressure. Though we ask him to go slow and take care of himself, yet his eagerness to serve urges him to undertake heavy responsibilities.

All those who have come in contact with Kumarappa will recognise that he always sticks to principles and will never compromise. Once there was a controversy between the Metropolitan of India and himself. I read about it in the papers and wrote to him saying that he should not use such strong words, though what he said was correct. He wrote back to me saying, "When you see a thing black, call it black and not brown."

He is fearless and stern in denouncing what he considers wrong. He would point out to us if we bought any foreign goods and say: "It is not the British Government who sends us to jail but you, my people." He is a hard task-master. He works hard himself and expects others also to do the same. But he is also very jovial and humorous. We always wish for his company when we meet together for any festivity. His buoyant, cheerful nature enlivens and brightens our company and keeps us roaring with laughter.

Kumarappa is a man of strong will-power and the amount of work he turns out in spite of his high blood pressure is due to his will-power. He works till the doctors examine him and tell him that he will fall down dead if he did not listen to them. Gandhiji understood him very well and gave him all the help needed to carry out and develop the Village Industries Association. Kumarappa has put his heart and soul into this great work and we all feel that he has made a very definite contribution to our national thinking on village reconstruction. In this effort he got his younger brother, Bharatan, to help him. J. C. Kumarappa has helped us by the example of his life to a clearer understanding of Gandhiji's ideals. Each one of us, whatever our

calling may be, have tried in our own way to serve the poor and help towards the betterment of our fellow beings by doing some constructive work. Here is a clear proof of what a mother's influence and training can achieve. We thank God for our parents, who spared no pains to train and educate us and pray that we may be faithful to the guidance and light imparted to us.

II

FIRST MEETING WITH GANDHIJI

G. R. AND M. V.

How Kumarappa first met Gandhiji is an interesting story. Kumarappa had returned from the U. S. A. in 1929. He was completely westernized in his habits and way of life. He dressed scrupulously in the European style and went about waving a walking stick. He, therefore, naturally came nowhere near those who were in contact with Gandhiji, much less with Gandhiji himself. And yet he was fated, not only to come to Gandhiji, but to become one of his closest co-workers !

While at the Columbia University he had written a thesis on "Public Finance and Our Poverty ". He was thinking of publishing it on the advice of some friends. Then some one told him that Gandhiji might possibly be interested in his thesis. He, therefore, wished to show it to Gandhiji. He was not however known to Gandhiji at all. Then a good chance came. Gandhiji was in Bombay towards the end of April 1929. He was then staying at " Manibhavan ", Laburnam Road, Gamdevi. Kumarappa decided to go and see Gandhiji at Manibhavan with his thesis. And so in his European dress, as usual, he climbed the stair-case at Manibhavan and was met by Gandhiji's secretary,

Pyarelal, who told him that Gandhiji was busy attending a meeting of the Congress Working Committee, and therefore Kumarappa could get no interview with him on that day. So Kumarappa put his manuscript in the hands of Pyarelal and asked him to give it to Gandhiji and then promptly walked out. But luck was with him. Pyarelal telephoned later and asked Kumarappa to meet Gandhiji in the Satyagraha Ashram in Sabarmati, at 2-30 P. M. on the 9th of May, 1929. Gandhiji evidently wanted to see Kumarappa only after getting some time to glance through his thesis.

Kumarappa reached the Satyagraha Ashram on the morning of 9th May. He was taken to the guest room in the Ashram. He looked about and was dismayed to see that the only furniture was a charpoi or cot. There was a mat to squat on and absolutely no other conveniences, including modern toilet arrangements. He said to himself that he must finish his work quickly and get away from the place. At about 2 P. M. he walked up to Gandhiji's hut on the Sabarmati river bank, like any burra saheb in his European costume and with his unfailing walking stick. Here it would be interesting to quote Kumarappa himself. "On the way up, I saw an old man seated under a tree, on a neatly cleaned, cowdunged floor, spinning. Having never seen a spinning wheel before, I leaned on my walking stick and standing akimbo was watching as there were still 10 minutes for the appointment. This old man, after about 5 minutes, looked at his watch, opened his toothless lips and with a smile on his face, enquired if I was Kumarappa. It suddenly dawned on me that my questioner may be no other than Mahatma Gandhi. So, I, in my turn, asked him if he was Gandhiji and when he nodded I promptly sat down on the cowdunged floor, regardless of the well-kept crease of my silk trousers. Seeing me sitting with outstretched legs, more or less in a reclining position, some one from the house came hurrying up with a chair for me, and Gandhiji asked me to get up and sit on the chair more comfortably. I replied that since he was seated on the floor I did not propose to take the chair."*

A conversation naturally ensued. Gandhiji must have told him that he had glanced through the thesis and that he liked it. He went

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* From *Incidents from Gandhiji's Life:* Edited by C. S. Shukla: Vora & Co., Bombay.

further and told Kumarappa that his approach to economics was the same as Kumarappa's. Why should not Kumarappa then help him in his work of village reconstruction ? Why not make a beginning with an economic survey of some of the villages in Gujarat ? Kumarappa interrupted to say that he knew neither Hindi nor Gujarati and how could such a person undertake the study of villages in Gujarat ? With his characteristic frankness Gandhiji brushed away this objection by saying that there were the Professors and workers of the Gujarat Vidyapith, who would come to his rescue. He then suggested that Kumarappa should meet Kaka Saheb Kalelkar who was then the Vice-Chancellor of the Gujarat Vidyapith. With a merry twinkle in his eye Gandhiji informed Kumarappa that the person who had hurried up with a chair a little earlier was Kaka Saheb himself. Thus was laid the trap of the spirit for the Western-trained economist.

Kumarappa the same afternoon went over to the Gujarat Vidyapith nearby and met Kaka Saheb Kalelkar. It was not a very cordial meeting. Kaka Saheb wondered what a person like Kumarappa could do for Gandhiji. Kumarappa did not like the hard realism of Kaka Saheb who insisted that without a knowledge of Gujarati Kumarappa would be useless in the villages of Gujarat, whatever might be his training. Kumarappa therefore left Sabarmati the same evening without waiting to see Gandhiji again. But after reaching Bombay he wrote to Gandhiji that Kaka Saheb did not approve of him, but that he was willing to undertake any work that Gandhiji might entrust him with. That was the chance for Gandhiji, who immediately replied that Kumarappa should go back to Sabarmati and start the work already suggested. Kumarappa had a shrewd idea that Gandhiji must have talked to Kaka Saheb and pulled him up for turning away a person who was willing to help; and he was right. Kumarappa then joined Gandhiji.

There is yet one more interesting anecdote before the capture was completed. Kumarappa's articles on "Public Finance and Our Poverty" appeared as a serial in *Young India* when Gandhiji was already on his famous "Dandi March". Kumarappa thought that the articles should be brought out in book form and he was naturally keen on getting Gandhiji to write a foreword. He therefore went to Karadi where Gandhiji was in the course of his trek to Dandi and

knowing how busy and preoccupied Gandhiji would be, he took with him a brief ready-made draft of the foreword for Gandhiji's signature. The meeting was again significant. Gandhiji smilingly told Kumarappa that if he ever signed a foreword it would be written by himself and not by Kumarappa and then quickly added that he had more important work to transact than approving the draft of a foreword! He told Kumarappa that he wanted him to help Mahadev Desai, who would have to edit the *Young India*, immediately Gandhiji was arrested. This took Kumarappa utterly by surprise. *Young India* was then Gandhiji's weekly, which was deeply stirring the soul of India and how could he, a new-comer, suddenly contribute anything worthwhile to its columns. But Gandhiji once again brushed aside all objections and said that he, as the Editor, was quite competent to judge who could help or not. Kumarappa had to promise to help. Curiously, Mahadev Desai was arrested before Gandhiji and Gandhiji himself was arrested a little later, and Kumarappa had to take-over editorial charge of *Young India*. He would never have done that but for the spontaneous and inspiring trust that Gandhiji placed in him at the very start. But that was Gandhiji's way and that was how he captured the soul of Young India. And thus did Kumarappa come into the hands of Gandhiji and there he remained during all the life of the Master and ever since to this day.

III

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MASTER

G. R. AND M. V.

The years then were revolutionary in the history of India. Gandhiji's Salt Satyagraha movement swept the country, at first like a gentle breeze, and then grew into a mighty storm. From one end of the country to the other millions of men and women were rising in peaceful revolt against British rule. In a peaceful revolt, while many actively participate, many more co-operate silently. Kumarappa, as the Editor of *Young India*, the weekly organ of the Gandhian revolution, played his part without hesitation or fear. He wrote vigorous and trenchant articles, challenging the very basis of British rule in India. He attacked the taxation policy and the financial transactions of the Government and pleaded for complete non-co-operation, including boycott of the Census. He attacked the police terrorism which was then widely let loose on the people. On one occasion the grave misconduct of a number of European Sergeants came to his notice and he drafted for *Young India* a severe and pointed attack. A valued co-worker opposed the publication of the article written in such strong language and suggested moderation in the language and the style. But Kumarappa insisted that in defending the truth and exposing evil, there could be

no compromise or even moderation. This is one of the traits in the character of Kumarappa which has remained with him throughout. In those days, and even now, he not only insists on calling a spade a spade but he goes further and says that anything else would be a betrayal of truth. The article was published without any change and created a stir. The aggrieved co-worker wrote to Gandhiji regarding the article. Gandhiji's reaction was, as usual, characteristic. He laughed and said that Kumarappa came from Madras and that Madras was famous for its chillies! It was not possible to take the heat out of the chilly!

The Government was looking out for a chance to smash *Young India*. They struck out with an order under Section 112 of the Criminal Procedure Code by which they served notice on Kumarappa on the 3rd of February, 1931. The order signed by the Additional District Magistrate, Ahmedabad, makes interesting reading:

"Whereas I have information that you Mr. J. C. Kumarappa, residing in Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, and within the limits of my jurisdiction, that as reported by the local Intelligence Branch Police Sub-Inspector, Mr. H. R. Thakkar, you are writing seditious articles in the different issues of *Young India* so as to cause feelings of contempt and disaffection among the public against Government established by law and thus intentionally disseminate seditious matters which are punishable under Section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code and whereas in my opinion there is sufficient ground for proceeding against you: this is to require you to appear in my Court on 12-2-31 at 2 P. M. and to show cause why you should not be ordered to execute a bond under Section 108 Criminal Procedure Code to be of good behaviour for one year in a sum of Rs. 500, with one surety being one not involved in a crime having property in the British territory". On the 21st of February, 1931, Kumarappa appeared in Court after one adjournment and refused to execute any bond for good behaviour or even to accept the jurisdiction of the Court itself. He however, made a statement before the Court. It was an inspiring statement without the slightest compromise on the twin issues of justice and truth. Here are some remarkable passages :-

"I shall take up the consideration of the position of the present Government of India. As distinct from despotism which

cannot lay claim to any loyalty from the subject save that of obedience due to fear of the strong arm, only a Government founded on the free will of the people it governs, can be said to be a "Government by law established". Has the Government of India any pretence to be such a Government ? The Government of India is established by an act of Parliament of Great Britain and the British Parliament represents only the will of the British people. The British Government can therefore function as a legal body only in London, but not in Peking or Delhi, in which places it becomes an illegal association imposing its rule on unwilling people. The people of India owe no more allegiance to this Government than does the man in the moon. Where there is no ground for a bond of affection, it follows that I cannot be guilty of spreading disaffection".

"As regards the charge that I am causing feelings of contempt against the Government, I am afraid, you are totally misinformed. It is not I who cause contempt. It is the accredited agents of the Government who bring it into disrepute. As long as the public is capable of reacting in a human way, what feelings, may I ask, will the ridiculous sight of hefty Sergeants chasing street urchins to snatch bits of paper and their white caps, draw forth ? Can the chivalrous acts of the high placed officials, themselves products of the British Universities, who encamp near Borsad to organise onslaught on elderly women like Ganga Behn and tender girls like Leelavati, and their laboured attempt to justify such action by lies, elicit any feelings other than contempt for the Government they represent ?"

"Now a word as to your jurisdiction. As the Government of India is an usurper of the people's rights and as its laws are but executive mandates or ordinances, you have no power arising from the people in whom rests sovereignty. You are an arm of the Executive and hence you have no jurisdiction over me and it is not for me to participate in this farce of a judicial proceeding. With reference to the sentence you will be pleased to pronounce on me, I have no desire to insult you by asking for anything in particular. No doubt you have your instructions and I shall be glad to hear you."

Later, Gandhiji on reading Kumarappa's statement before the Court laughed and said, "Which person who reads this statement can say that he did not deserve what he got". Kumarappa was sentenced

to one year of imprisonment and was locked up in the Sabarmati Jail. He was, however, released soon after in accordance with the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. He was arrested again in 1932 and was in prison for two years. His third imprisonment was in 1943. Curiously, then also he was imprisoned for writing an article, this time in the "Gram Udyog Patrika", entitled "A Stone for Bread". Though twelve years had passed since he made his first defiant statement before the British Magistrate in Ahmedabad in 1931, there is in this article also the same fiery spirit challenging the Government again for the evils it was inflicting upon his country. The Second World War was then at its full and fatal tide and it was a time most dangerous to indulge in any criticism of the British Government in India and particularly of their desperate financial transactions. In this article Kumarappa attacked "The United Kingdom Commercial Corporation" which was then playing havoc with the economic interests of the people. He also attacked the Reserve Bank for some of the notorious policies it was then indulging in, under the direction of its British masters. Here are some relevant extracts :—

"The Government is inflating the currency to such an extent as to make it almost worthless. The villagers are parting with valuable food grain for worthless paper. Unless the present prices are at least 12 times the old prices it is ruinous to part with our goods. Various devices are being used to induce farmers to exchange their commodities for paper."

"The framers of the Reserve Bank Act had conveniently provided for the forty per cent backing of currency notes by Bullion or Sterling Securities, with the only condition that the bullion part is never below 40 crores. Bullion has intrinsic value, while the paper security represents only the credit of Great Britain. It is wrong in principle to have placed these two unlikes on equal footing. Under this subtle provision, keeping the statutory minimum of 40 crores of Bullion, the Bank can increase its note issue to any amount against paper securities which may lead to a dangerous inflation in currency."

"The Reserve Bank has now in its possession 325 crores of Sterling Securities. Even these are too good to be left in India in case the British have to withdraw from India. So the Finance Member is arranging to transfer £.30 millions to London against

the future payments of interest on railway bonds. In addition to this, to save the private British investors in Indian railways, it is proposed to pay them off and to make the Government of India acquire these railways even before the due date. By so hurrying up, all what can be is scraped off the dish before the British leave India. This is the spear-head of their financial scorched earth policy."

How could the British Government help suppressing the voice of a man who was so relentlessly speaking the truth and exposing their misdeeds ? He was sentenced to a term of two years' imprisonment. He nearly lost his life during this term of incarceration, as his health completely broke down due to high blood pressure. He, however, emerged from these trials and sufferings stronger in spirit and convinced more than ever before that Gandhiji was right and that he must follow in the Master's footsteps at all costs.

IV

THE CONSTRUCTIVE WORKER

G. R. AND M. V.

The Indian National Congress at its 1931 session in Karachi appointed a Committee, with Kumarappa as Convener, to go into the details of the transactions of the East India Company and the British Government in India and the so-called "Public Debt of India", and to report on the obligations which should in future be borne by India or England. Regarding the selection of Kumarappa for the work, Gandhiji then wrote, "Kumarappa was chosen for this particular task for his accurate knowledge of Economics and his aptitude for research work." The Committee put in very hard work and brought out a momentous report within less than three months and this was then published by the Congress. The publication of the report created a stir in India and in England. Gandhiji made use of the report while he attended the Round Table Conference in London in 1931. Taking his stand on the report, he said at the Conference, referring to India's Public Debt, "The Congress is emphatically of the opinion that the obligations to be taken over by the in-coming Government should be subject to audit and impartial examination." The report showed that England owed India Rs. 1,805½

crores at the time, the bulk of the expenditure having been incurred by the British on their wars consequent to their imperialistic policy.

Now this was Kumarappa's second and detailed study of the background of the economic situation in India, the first being his thesis, "Public Finance and Our Poverty". The material used in the earlier thesis was originally collected while he was a student under Professor E. R. A. Seligman of the Columbia University, New York, and was later put together in a form suitable to the general reader and published as a series of articles in *Young India* during 1929 and 1930.

Soon after his release from his second imprisonment, Gandhiji sent Kumarappa to Bihar to assist Shri Rajendra Prasad in the great work of relieving the distress that had overtaken Bihar in the earthquake of January, 1934. Within a few minutes, the earthquake had brought terrible disaster to the districts of Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Saran, Patna and Monghyr, covering an area of nearly 30,000 sq. miles. The Bihar Central Relief Committee had Shri Rajendra Babu as its President and Shri Anugraha Narayana Sinha as General Secretary. Kumarappa was appointed Internal Auditor and Convener of the Finance Sub-Committee. The Relief Committee handled a fund of about Rs. 30 lakhs, the expenditure being spread out over hundreds of items and places. But thanks to the untiring vigilance and efficiency of Kumarappa as the Internal Auditor, the Relief Committee was finally able to account for every pie spent. How he made even Gandhiji and his party, plunged in relief work, to pay for their board and conveyance is now a well-known story. Referring to the contribution made by Kumarappa, Shri Rajendra Prasad has written, "It will be difficult to enumerate all those men and women who came to the help of Bihar from outside the Province. It will be a shame to let slip even a single name. But there are certain names which it will be the height of ingratitude not to mention and the name of Shri J. C. Kumarappa is one such. He looked after all the accounts. He had high training in England and was once auditing the accounts of big firms in Bombay. It will be no exaggeration to say that if he had not come and organised the accounts in a thorough-going manner we would have been landed in serious difficulties. We had no less than 2000 workers spread over 12 districts and only a few of them had any idea of keeping accounts. There were numerous items of

work and therefore numerous separate accounts. The work had assumed such vast proportions that it was difficult to manage it. But when Shri Kumarappa's methods were adopted everything fell into its proper place. When the people showed enthusiasm beyond all expectations and money poured in to help in relief work, I was beset with the fear that the public may have reason to feel that their confidence was misplaced. But thanks to Shri Kumarappa and the band of workers under him, the whole work was carried out successfully."

That a person of the training, sincerity and capacity of Kumarappa could not remain without good work continually coming into his hands was proved soon after. The true significance of Swadeshi had become a matter for study under Gandhiji. Gandhiji gave a new definition to Swadeshi, relating Swadeshi intimately to the production of articles in villages, by village handicraftsmen. Gandhiji had suggested a formula for the guidance of the All-India Swadeshi League. Gandhiji had said, "Swadeshi covers useful articles manufactured in India through small industries, which are in need of popular education for their support, and which will accept the guidance of the All-India Swadeshi League in regulating prices and in the matter of the wages and the welfare of labour under their control. Swadeshi will exclude articles manufactured through the large and organised industries which are in no need of the services of the League and which can, or do, command state aid." Some important leaders did not agree to this new conception of Swadeshi. But Gandhiji was convinced that if the majority of the masses of the people, who lived and worked in the Villages, were to get the touch of a new life then his definition of Swadeshi was sound. To give effect to his ideas Gandhiji conceived of a Village Industries Association and at his instance the Indian National Congress, at its 48th Session, held on 27th October, 1934, in Bombay, passed the following resolution:—"Whereas organisations claiming to advance Swadeshi have sprung up all over the country, with and without the assistance of Congressmen, and whereas much confusion has arisen in the public mind as to the true nature of Swadeshi, and whereas the aim of the Congress has been from its inception progressive identification with the masses, and whereas village reorganisation and reconstruction is one of the items of the Constructive Programme of the Congress, and whereas such reconstruction necessarily implies revival and encouragement of dead or dying village industries, besides the central industry of hand-spinning, and whereas this work, like the reorganisa-

tion of hand-spinning, is possible only through concentrated and special effort, unaffected by and independent of the political activities of the Congress, Shri J. C. Kumarappa is hereby authorised to form, under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji, an Association called the All India Village Industries Association as part of the activities of the Congress. The said Association shall work for the revival and encouragement of the said industries and for the moral and physical advancement of the villages and shall have power to frame its own constitution, to raise funds, and to perform such acts as may be necessary for the fulfilment of its objects."

It was thus that the All India Village Industries Association was formed on the 14th of December, 1934, and it was as the Secretary of the Association that Shri Kumarappa then emerged fully in the role of a Constructive Worker under Gandhiji. During the next 15 years Kumarappa's contribution to Constructive work was in and through the A. I. V. I. A. Under him the work of the A. I. V. I. A. generally fell into four parts: (1) experiments in village industries, (2) training of workers, (3) extension work and (4) propaganda and education through publications. The story of the A. I. V. I. A. and its steady growth is told elsewhere in this volume. Kumarappa became known as the true interpreter of Gandhian Economics and his speeches and writings helped the younger generation greatly to understand the significance and scope of the village movement initiated by Gandhiji.

When, in 1938, the Indian National Congress set up the National Planning Committee under the Chairmanship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Kumarappa was selected as one of the Members of the Committee. But he soon found that Gandhiji's and his own ideas on village industries were not fully acceptable to many of the other members of the National Planning Committee. He put up a good fight and then found it was hopeless to go on. He put the matter before Gandhiji and on the 10th of June, 1939, Gandhiji wrote to Kumarappa the following characteristic note :-

My dear Ku.,

If you can slip away gently after conferring with J. N. certainly come away and do some work instead of listening to grand discourses. You have done your duty. Love, Bapu.

Kumarappa then promptly resigned from the National Planning Committee. After his resignation he became even more uncompromising in his advocacy of the principles of Gandhian Economics.

On the 15th of December, 1938, the Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (now Madhya Pradesh) appointed a Committee with Kumarappa as Chairman, called the Industrial Survey Committee. The terms of reference given to the Committee were significant. They were :- (1) To review the work done in the province by the Department of Industries since its establishment, (2) to supervise the collection of data relating to large, small and especially cottage industries from previous publications and reports by an officer appointed for the purpose, (3) to advise the officer-in-charge as regards the lines on which the industrial survey of the province should be undertaken and to review its progress from time to time, (4) to visit typical villages, study their economic condition and examine the possibility of reviving cottage industries and in doing so to take the advice and guidance of the All India Spinners' Association and the All India Village Industries Association, (5) to report on the industrial possibilities of the raw materials available in the province with special reference to the forest and mineral resources and (6) to report on the measures which Government can undertake to promote industrial development within the province, especially of cottage industries in the Villages, and to suggest methods for financing the same or otherwise promoting them.

This Committee completed its work and submitted a report on the 17th of March, 1939. The report still holds the field as an authentic document on the subject of industrial development in Madhya Pradesh.

In 1940 Kumarappa produced a similar report for the North West Frontier Province in response to an invitation from the Provincial Government. He made a study of the economic conditions of the industries in the North West Frontier Province and suggested measures for Government to adopt in order to better the economic conditions of the people by developing existing industries, especially cottage and village industries, and by promoting new industries to utilise fully the raw materials and resources available in

the province. He toured all the six districts of the province and Dir, Swat and Amb States, personally visiting numerous villages. He studied the bazaars and even the weekly markets to acquaint himself with local conditions.

In both the above reports, Kumarappa successfully placed the villages in the centre of the picture of national reconstruction, adjusting town industries and interests in such a way as not to destroy rural development. Villages and village industries secured the first place and towns and town industries only a secondary place. How different that was from national planning to-day, which gives prominence to large scale industries and only secondary importance to village industries! Kumarappa still holds to the same technique of planning and that is why perhaps he is not needed in high quarters which are to-day dealing with national reconstruction.

In 1938 again Kumarappa worked as a Member of another important All India Committee i. e., the Zakir Hussain Committee on Basic Education. He was during these years and after, a prolific writer and produced several important books on Indian Economics. Some of these are, *Why the Village Movement*, *Economy of Permanence*, *An Overall Plan for Rural Development*, *Clive to Keynes*, *Currency inflation--its causes and cure*, and *Philosophy of work.*

Another work of great importance came into Kumarappa's hands early in 1948. Towards the end of December, 1947, a Conference of Revenue Ministers from all over India was held in Delhi and this Conference unanimously suggested the appointment of an Agrarian Reforms Committee. Shri Rajendra Prasad, the then President of the Congress, constituted the Committee with Kumarappa as Chairman and with the following terms of reference:–

"The Committee will have to examine and make recommendations about agrarian reforms arising out of the abolition of zamindari system in the light of conditions prevailing in the different provinces. The Committee will consider and report on co-operative farming and methods of improving agricultural production, position of small holdings, sub-tenants, landless labourers and generally on improving the conditions of agricultural rural population."

From the 15th of June, 1948, to the middle of January, 1949, the Committee toured the Central Provinces and Berar, Bombay, Assam, Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Madras and the United Provinces. The Committee met in May, 1949, and in the course of eighteen sittings considered the Draft Report and the final report was ready by the second week of July the same year. In all, the Committee held five meetings and had forty-one sittings. The final report is now available under the title, *Report of the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee,* published by the All India Congress Committee, New Delhi. A summary of the report is annexed elsewhere in this Volume. For many years to come this Report will hold the field in regard to the study of the existing agrarian situation in India and the solutions needed to take the country out of a most serious and depressing crisis concerning the whole of the land problem in the country. The solutions suggested are so radical and far reaching that the Congress, which appointed the Committee and the Central and State Governments run by the Congress Party, have not dared even to touch it.

With the passing of the years Shri Kumarappa has easily become one of the half a dozen leading Constructive Workers in India. All over the country there are numerous village workers who look up to Kumarappa for guidance and inspiration. After the death of Gandhiji, Kumarappa turned his mind in the direction of co-ordinating the various organisations of Constructive work under some effective over-all guidance. It is largely due to his efforts that we have now the Sarva Seva Sangh, with which the All India Village Industries Association and the Krishi and Go Seva Sangh have merged and the Charka Sangh and the Talimi Sangh are federated.

When some time ago the Government of India set up the National Planning Commission, Kumarappa was included as a Member of its Advisory Board. His contribution to the deliberations of the Advisory Board has only emphasised once more the difference of outlook between the present National Planners and the Constructive Workers. Kumarappa, however, turned his attention to work of more fundamental importance. He has selected a village centre, twenty miles away from Wardha, to carry on further practical agrarian

research and to demonstrate the possibility of building up village self-sufficiency. This village centre is in Seldoh and Kumarappa has already placed before the public his new plans of work. He has himself called this new experiment as one in "The Unitary Basis for a Non-Violent Democracy". He has resigned his Presidentship of the All India Village Industries Association to plunge into this new experiment in a remote village. Acharya Vinobaji, who recently visited Seldoh, paid high tribute to the work started in Seldoh by Kumarappa. When Kumarappa, only a few days ago, received the invitation to join the Indian Goodwill Mission to the Peoples' Republic of China he hesitated to go, saying that his work lay in Seldoh. It was largely due to the pressure of his co-workers in Maganvadi that he finally accepted the invitation and left for China. His letters, however, make it clear that his mind is in Seldoh.

From the rural survey of the Matar Taluq in 1929 to Seldoh in 1951 we have thus the story of a man who has given himself ungrudgingly to the work of village reconstruction in India. This is all the more astonishing because all Kumarappa's training was in England and in America. Most people, who get such training, develop an all-absorbing urban outlook. Kumarappa, however, came back to the village background with an energy and devotion next only to that of his Master.

V

REBEL STILL

G. R. AND M. V.

The coming of freedom to India has not as yet enabled Kumarappa to play a role different from that of a rebel. If, in the earlier period, Kumarappa was a fearless rebel against British rule, he is to-day an equally fearless rebel against the Congress Governments in New Delhi and in the various States.

Kumarappa has toured in India extensively during the last three years. First, as the Chairman of the Agrarian Reforms Committee, he visited 61 places in the States of Bombay, Assam, Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Madras and Uttar Pradesh, covering more than 14,000 miles. Then, on his own, he has gone up and down India, tirelessly visiting places as far away as Hoshiarpur and Jullundar in the Punjab, Sibsagar and Gauhati in Assam and villages in the Tinnevelly District in the extreme south of India. In all these travels he has touched towns merely en-route, but his destinations have invariably been villages. He has thus come in intimate touch with the daily life of the villagers throughout the country. He is never a casual visitor to any place. He observes everything, questions everybody and collects his facts painstakingly. As a result, he has come to

the clear conclusion that freedom has not really come to, or touched the life of, the masses of the people in the villages. He is convinced that what has happened is merely that an Indian bureaucracy has taken over from the British bureaucracy in New Delhi and in the States' capitals. There is an illusion of democratic form and structure, but the substance inside continues to be bureaucratic, just as before. That this is the result now, after the long years of the struggle for freedom, has hurt him deeply and made him indignant to a degree. The Congress won political freedom from the British, but the Congress Governments have surrendered that freedom to the administrative machinery and the patterns of nation-building left behind by the British. This is his uncompromising thesis to-day. He has, therefore, sharpened his pen and his tongue more than ever before. He has not hesitated to state that Congress Governments have betrayed the masses. The Congress had made solemn pledges to the people but not redeemed them.

He took stock of the achievements of independent India after an year of political freedom and wrote as follows in October 1948: "Most of those who hold the reins, both at the Centre and in the Provinces, have been in the saddle for a year and more. Our measuring rod will be the good bestowed on the masses. In whichever direction we turn, food, clothing or shelter, the conditions are definitely worse to-day. Starvation and death face many. Rationing and controls have played havoc and have helped to create black-markets which are deepening in their black colour every day. Money crops are merrily going on increasing, to enable the middle man to export raw materials. Our Government has been blindly following the methods adopted by countries like Great Britain and that indifferently. They export manufactures and import food materials. All food coming into the country is known and that, when it is divided by the number of the population, gives the ration per head. Thus the rationing and control of prices can serve to alleviate the situation in Great Britain. Our approach should be from the other end. We have to afford facilities for increasing such production as the country needs. This indicates licensing and regulating production rather than rationing and doling out existing stock of goods. While the character

of the problem in Great Britain admits of placing it under the administrative machinery for its solution, the situation in our country, on the other hand, calls for technical experts from the agricultural department. What have they done up to now ?".

Winding up his argument, Kumarappa concluded by saying, "Gandhiji is being hailed as the 'Father of the Nation' throughout the land. No Government in our country has accepted Gandhiji's ideals for the country. Indeed, Gandhiji is either the father of a monster or a father without a child. There will be time enough to confer fatherhood on him when the country whole-heartedly adopts his programme based on the welfare of the masses". Strong language this, but it is the same temper in action of the man who told the British Magistrate in Ahmedabad, years earlier, to get out and leave India to her own.

In June 1949, in an article entitled "Portents of a Revolution", he hit out against the pomp and splendour of New Delhi and the wasteful expenditure of public money. Here are some telling paragraphs :—

"The Britishers have gone, but they appear to have left behind them a tradition which has taken a deep root in the lives of some of us. Luxury is a sign of decadence. If increase in quantity and quality of production does not keep pace with the rise in the standard of living, it is an unhealthy sign. If consumption shifts towards comfort and luxury, while production and producers are stifled, it spells danger. The last condition is fast asserting itself in our country. The symptoms are best seen in the capital city of New Delhi. The picture of India is like a beggar in tattered garments with an empty stomach, sporting a carnation in his button hole ! We wonder if this incongruity never strikes those who perpetrate it ! No doubt, all this is an increase in the standard of living ! The mansion in York Road was not good enough for the Prime Minister, who is always talking of increasing our standard of living, and he had to move into the palace of the Commander-in-Chief ! The Ministers are vying with each other and giving garden parties, but when we look at the sum total of benefit that they have conferred on poor John citizen, we could almost say nil, if

not worse. We fear all these signs of the times are reminiscent of the condition that prevailed towards the close of Czarist Russia. We hope and pray that these do not portend a similar fate awaiting India. Imperial splendour at one end and dire need and poverty at the other is the stuff revolutions are made of. These conditions are increasingly evident in our land. Symptomatic treatment, such as arresting of Communists and Socialists, is no cure for this malady. Drastic change in our body politic is indicated. Will our leaders wake up in time to avoid a catastrophe or are we heading on to a violent revolution ?"

This is the writing, not of a violent Communist or Socialist, but of an outstanding Gandhian Constructive worker to whom non-violence is the only worthwhile law of life. Does it not prove that non-violent revolution asks for the same results as Communism or Socialism, though the methods of action are different ?

On the 15th of February 1950, Kumarappa told a meeting of land-holders of Madura in South India that the time had come when private property in land as a means of investment would be looked upon as a crime. He said that in his view there should be no private property in land and that land should be vested in the community and should be free just as light, air and water. Land should be given as a means of production only to those who were in a position to hold it for the benefit of society. There was a great awakening in India to-day and wisdom lay in reading the signs of the time and everyone adjusting himself accordingly. The land-holder should be more than satisfied if he got 4% return on the capital he has invested in the land as in the case of bank deposits. It will be quite fair if the land-owner and the cultivating tenant share the produce in the proportion of one third and two thirds respectively. He referred to the laws under the national government and said sugar-cane growers in Nilakottai Taluk in the Madura District in South India were prohibited from manufacturing jaggery, as a village industry, except under licence and were compelled to undersell their sugar-cane at a fixed price to a sugar mill. He said in an outburst of indignation, "I am ashamed to be the citizen of a country where such a law can prevail, with the so-called national government at the top".

Such attacks from a well known co-worker of Gandhiji did not leave the Government cold. More than one State Government played with the idea of taking action against Kumarappa and suppressing his voice. One member at least of the Central Cabinet in New Delhi enquired from another prominent co-worker of Gandhiji in Wardha how it was possible for any Government to allow Kumarappa to go on in this way. Better counsels prevailed, however, and no unholy hand was laid upon one of the truest and bravest of the co-workers left behind by Gandhiji.

Kumarappa, the builder of the Village Industries Association and the exponent of the economics of cottage industries, has recently taken a deeper plunge. Like Shri Vinobaji, he has come to the conclusion that land and agriculture should now absorb the attention of all Constructive Workers. He has pointed out that Gandhiji did not take up this problem earlier because land and agriculture were so much subservient to British administrative machinery that it would have been an impossible task to attack the British system then at that point. Gandhiji, therefore, deliberately chose other points for attack. But to-day with our own national government in power we have to take up the challenge of this problem without delay. Kumarappa has, therefore, now turned his attention from village industry to the village itself i. e. land, as of basic importance in Constructive Work at the present time. As Chairman of the Agrarian Reforms Committee he had the unique opportunity to study the terrible and baffling problems arising from and connected with land and agriculture in India. It has become clear to him that the weakest link in the chain of national life is the presence of millions of those, who are agricultural labourers and who own no land at all. Their lives are crushed under oppression and poverty. He has, therefore, made himself a champion of this class. He does not want a violent revolution, which will destroy everything good and bad. The only other alternative is a peaceful revolution conducted and regulated on Gandhian lines. This requires a change of heart in the upper classes and a change of attitude and will on the part of the landless classes. Kumarappa is perhaps more fitted to help the second process rather than the first and this role he is filling admirably. In the Tanjore District in the Madras State, Kumarappa came up against clear traces of, what was nothing

less than, the semi-slavery of the landless agricultural labourers and he struck out against it with all his strength. This led to what has become known as the Kozhayur Incident, to explain which, the Madras Government had to come out with a long and laboured statement.

Kumarappa has left the All India Village Industries Association, of which he was the Secretary for sixteen years, and later President, to give all his time to this new work which has taken possession of his mind. He has selected the Seldoh village, twenty miles from Wardha for, what he calls, Agrarian Research. The Sarva Seva Sangh has adopted this work as its own, with Kumarappa as Director. It is of significance that, while the political followers of Gandhiji have gone into the seats of power and have begun to turn away from the patterns and values laid down by the Master, Kumarappa, the Constructive Worker, has left his place as the head of an all-India organisation to seek personal fellowship with the villager. The Seldoh experiment is at the moment a small one, but it is a most significant one. It is Kumarappa's laboratory in the village, from which will come the discovery of the basic principles, which would be applicable to land and agriculture throughout India, in order that land may be properly and justly redistributed and agriculture become primarily the instrument of balanced cultivation.

It was on the 9th of May 1929 that Kumarappa, the Western trained and Westernized Chartered Accountant, met Gandhiji on the banks of the Sabarmati river. Some twenty two years have now passed away. It was Gandhiji who inspired Kumarappa to rebellion against British rule. To-day it is the heritage left by the Master and which is being betrayed by many of his followers, which inspires Kumarappa to rebellion again. He is one of those who will not fit into a static picture complacently. As a non-violent revolutionary he insists on moving forward. His trouble is that the revolutionaries of yesterday have become the reactionaries of to-day. That only increases his rebellious mood. And perhaps that is why he is a rebel still.

VI

THE MAN

G. R.

You will know Kumarappa best if you meet him in Maganvadi. That is his proper setting. He created it and has lived in it for seventeen years now. It is a big place with many fine trees and cool avenues, on the edge of Wardha town. There are quite a number of buildings, big and small, but the house that Kumarappa built is the smallest of them all. It is a one room hut, 20′ long and 15′ broad, with a low roof of country tiles. Inside, it is as tidy and pretty as can be. There is a little verandah which is the bed room in the rainy weather. The bed room in warm weather is the little open space between a wooden fence and the little hut, where there is a simple improvised wooden bedstead. The bath room, the dressing room, the drawing room and the dining room are all in the one room, of which the hut consists. It is a truly multi-purpose little room! The only furniture consists of another bedstead, a small table and a stool. There is a simple movable privy over a trench behind the hut. This is the famous Kumarappa hut. He is fonder and prouder of this hut than any Maharajah of his palace. He dislikes anybody intruding inside the little space enclosed by the wooden fence or the little hut. This is

his *sanctum-sanctorum*, where he relaxes all by himself. Dressed in his dhoti-jama and kurta he is an Indian in an Indian hut all right. But it is an Indian touched and moulded by some of the best things out of the West and it is a hut where everything is in order and in harmony. Two or three little framed pictures look sweet on the clean mud walls and the Indian brass lamp, with a wick burning in vegetable oil, adds a mystic touch to the little place. If the wind blows out the wick, he does not mind; he will light it again or just go to bed. If by chance you make the mistake of walking in, to have a word or two with him, he will get up and talk with you and move with you to the little wicket gate, without your knowing it, and then quietly see you out. That is his famous technique of getting rid of visitors who intrude into his Robinson Crusoe habitation! He is thus a genuine individualist in his daily life. Some would call him a lonely wolf.

Kumarappa is well known for his cut and dry habits and methods. The watch is his inseparable companion and his whole day, down to the minute detail, is regulated by it. During all these seventeen years in Maganvadi he has hardly ever been known to miss or to be late at a function or class or interview. Once or twice I caught him coming a little earlier than necessary to a class or a meeting according to my watch and twitted him about it saying, that 'too early' was as bad as 'too late'. He quietly asked me to correct my watch saying, that he daily checked up his watch with the radio time at the Doctor's! It is a confirmed habit with him to see no one without an appointment. More than once distinguished visitors, including a Minister or two, could not meet him because they had not made an appointment and so he was engaged otherwise. It once happened that there were some very important visitors in Maganvadi who had an appointment with him at 9 a. m. He waited till 9-10 and when the visitors arrived they were told he was engaged otherwise. Even his sisters and brothers have to conform to this habit of his. Occasionally this kind of thing very much puts out somebody or other, but he does not care at all. He himself will scrupulously observe such rules where others are concerned. He would never take up some one else's time without an appointment and will be always on time. If he did otherwise, and was therefore unable to meet some one,

he would not mind at all. The classical story is, how he once refused Gandhiji himself time for an important talk because there was no appointment and he was busy with some other work ! But Gandhiji was the one person most likely to appreciate such a situation.

Training in accountancy has made him acquire almost a passion for precision and brevity. He writes numerous letters but most of them are on cards and his longest letters hardly come to a page of an ordinary letter paper. I have seen how with a few pointed sentences he can answer long letters from correspondents. Here he was perhaps even one better than Gandhiji. He has the trick of filling up every available inch of space on a card or letter paper by writing on the margins and anywhere he can get a chance to scribble a few words. It is again his training in accountancy which has sharpened his habit of sifting facts from fiction and truth from exaggeration. Even while he speaks or writes with great heat of emotion he never exaggerates, but is always precise and concise. All his writings are thus characterised by clarity and pointedness. That is why when he attacks he is so deadly.

Kumarappa is a person who lives at a high nervous tension. This is so with him temperamentally. High blood pressure, from which he has long suffered, has only accentuated his emotional make up. He would flare up at one wrong word or gesture from anybody and then he would let himself go without reserve. This tendency in him has made him somewhat unpopular with his friends and co-workers. But every one knows that there is no trace of malice in him and that when his temper has blown out he becomes once more the very lovable and good humoured person that he really is. If people are not frightened of him, but meet him on his own level and are prepared to give and take, then he is a wonderful comrade and companion in any common work. The difficulty, however, is that most people are very sensitive and while they are willing to give they are not prepared to take. But Kumarappa is at all times the man willing to give and take in any argument. That is why those who know him intimately value his almost ruthless honesty and his plain-speaking. He is a good sport.

As his sister has testified elsewhere in this volume, Kumarappa, even from his early boyhood, could never tolerate any

injustice or the infliction of suffering on any one. When any such situation confronted him he would at once gird up his loins for a good fight. He is first and last a fighter, but a fighter of good causes in a non-violent way. He gave up eating meat many years ago, though he was born and brought up in an Indian-Christian family in which vegetarianism could not at all have been very popular. Even on his visits to Europe and America he has scrupulously adhered to his vegetarian food. Only the other day at the Chinese Consulate General in Calcutta, on his way to China, he satisfied his hunger by eating only some pickled mushrooms and vegetable salads at a dinner where every body else was eating the flesh of all kinds of birds and beasts. Kumarappa is a whole-hogger or nothing. This is true of his politics and his economics. He is an extremist in both and there is no half-way house for him. His dream is of a non-violent democracy, based on non-violent economics. No one in India has written more clearly or richly on non-violent economics or the economics of peace than he. If occasionally Kumarappa's language becomes strong and even violent in defence of his great dream there is little harm done.

Mr. Hallam Tennyson, a Pacifist, who served for two years at a Friends Service village rehabilitation project, has a good character study of Kumarappa in an article he wrote in the 'Peace News', in November 1948, entitled 'The Non-Violent Society'. Here are some fascinating extracts:—

> J. C. Kumarappa, the Secretary of the All India Village Industries Association at Wardha, is one of those men who practice what they preach. At Cabinet meetings, English tea parties or the throne rooms of kings, he is dressed always in the special cloth-saving dhoti that he has made famous. His personality, too, is every bit as unusual and as carefully integrated with his ideals as his dress. Not for a minute does he tolerate hypocrisy or compromise with his convictions.
>
> In his book "The Economy of Permanence" he describes how once a benevolent capitalist, who had just shown him with pride over his gold mine, turned to ask him whether he had any suggestions as to how the welfare of the miners could be improved. "Yes," replied Kumarappa promptly. "Close down the mine."
>
> Then there was his hostess in Delhi whom he surprised by placing on her plate at breakfast the cake of Tata soap that she had

provided for his comfort and asking her solemnly how she expected him to wash his hands in the blood of the children of Malabar, where the Tata coconut groves, planted to supply fat for the manufacture of their fancy soap, have replaced the rice fields.

But such caustic comments make Kumarappa few enemies. Even as he pronounces them in that voice of his, which can have at times such a sharp and sarcastic edge, there is a boyish twinkle in his eye, an engaging grin hovering over his mouth. For in spite of his apparent pugnacity, Kumarappa, like so many others who live and work at Sevagram, is at peace with the world. He can afford to be. What has a man to fear when he can meet all his own wants, when he is no longer the bewildered, helpless victim of a system that is out of harmony with the deeper needs of his spirit ? Such a man has everything to give and nothing to receive."

Only those who dedicate themselves to a cause and become selfless in such dedication earn the right to challenge the weakening of the moral fibre in others. In such a case the challenge has a ring of truth and sincerity beyond all question. Kumarappa is one of the very few in India to-day, who through a life of unbroken dedication to a cause, has earned the right to speak with moral authority to many of those who are already weakening and faltering as they try to walk in the way indicated by Gandhiji. He can challenge the economics of exploitation because his life is without exploitation of any body. He does not even keep a servant. He eats only the food cooked in the Maganvadi general kitchen, he washes his own clothes and seldom asks any one to do any personal service for him. I have never yet known the head of an Institution who so little depends on chelas or others placed under his care. One day he came to the general kitchen a little earlier than food time as he had to catch a train. His food was given to him on a bench in the open air outside the community kitchen. But there was no tumbler of water. I therefore called out to one of the students to run and fetch a tumbler of water. He quietly said to me, "You are an exploiter. If you had brought the tumbler of water yourself I would have accepted it as a little act of affection. But when you shout to a student to do the same then I am worried." That is the high moral sensibility of the man. That is why he challenges the whole of modern economics as one in which the strong ride the weak. It is Kakasaheb Kalelkar who has said of him, that if only Kumarappa were not

so full of fun and frolic and would put on a loin cloth he would straightaway be accepted as a pucca saint. The truth however is, he is a saint in the best sense of the word. His whole life is that of a saint. But he dresses like a common man and talks and lives like a normal man. How can a saint be acceptable in India in a dhoti-jama and a clean and well-stitched kurta and a Gandhi cap stuck on the head with the proper tilt?

Kumarappa has lived Christianity, not talked or preached it. His two books, *Practice and Precepts of Jesus* and *Christianity–Its Economy and Way of Life*, contain a matchless plea for true Christianity in action, for the Sermon on the Mount to be practised. It is not the plea of an intellectual merely. It is a plea from the heart of a dedicated life. No wonder Gandhiji himself wrote, "I can recommend their perusal to every believer in God, be he a Christian or a follower of any other religion. It is a revolutionary view of Jesus as a Man of God." A well-known Missionary Journal added, "We trust our readers will not fail to pray that the spirit of Christ, who led Kumarappa to write it, will bless its many readers. To read it is a searching spiritual exercise." I have sometimes wondered what Kumarappa would have become if he had not been trained as a Chartered Accountant and in Economics. The thought has come to me that he might well have become a great Christian religious leader. He is fundamentally a man of religion, but one whose kingdom is very much of this earth.

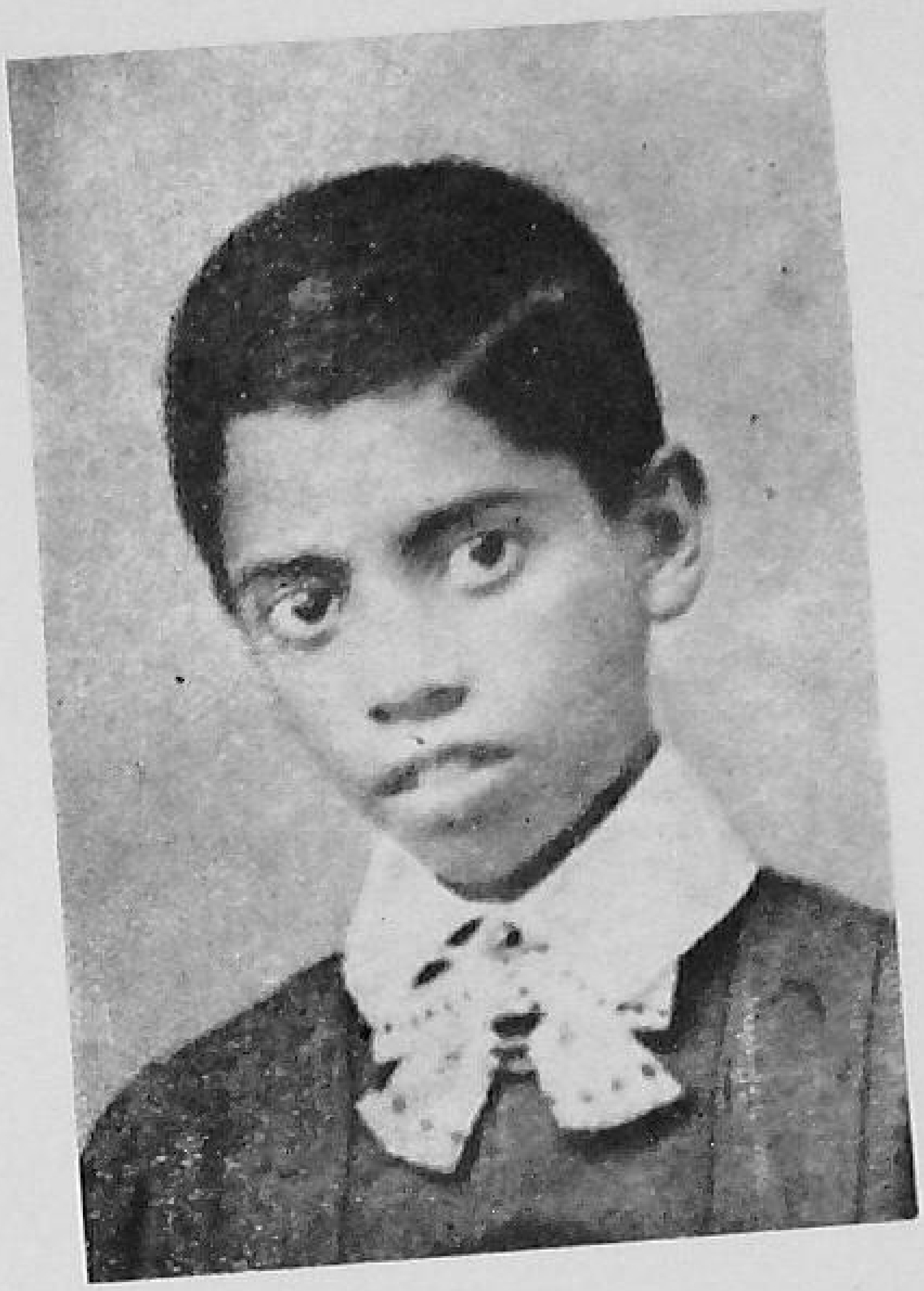
Kumarappa never married and it is now safe to presume that he will not marry at all. I once asked him how a man like him could ever have escaped the holy state of matrimony. He offered a curious but truthful answer: "I wanted to earn a four figure income before I married. When I touched that level Gandhiji caught me. Thereafter I had no time to get married." But having lived close to Kumarappa for nearly three years now, I can say I have hardly met a bachelor of his character and position with so little of regret that he never married. He has often struck me as a true *brahmachari*. His brahmacharya sits on him without any strain or affectation. That, I think, is perhaps the greatest tribute that can be paid to his character. There is nothing sour or bitter about his brahmacharya. He is a happy-hearted brahmachari who thoroughly enjoys the company of women. He will slap them on their backs and

pull their ears and blossom forth into brilliant conversation and repartee in their company. He is always full of gentleness and chivalry in his dealings with women, though he can always crack a joke or two at their expense. I have heard the story of how he was once travelling with a woman friend, who occupied a different compartment in the train. He would jump down at every station and race to her carriage to enquire if she wanted anything and wait till the train sent up its whistle to race back to his own compartment. He spoke the truth when he said that he could get no time to be married. He has built up a life of busy work around himself and wherever he is he plunges into his work. It is however very interesting to watch him in Maganvadi. He would go the round of the place regularly from time to time noticing everything. One day, as he was entering the paper department, he saw a dark finger impression on the soft mud wall. He noticed it at once and erased it neatly before he went in. There is not a stone or plant in Maganvadi which he does not know; and he is very jealous of Maganvadi. I have, therefore, sometimes told him that it is humbug to say he has not married because he is married to Maganvadi !

There is another well known joke of Kakasaheb Kalelkar. He has said, "If only Kumarappa knew his Hindi half as well as his English he would have long ago set the country on fire." He is a reckless revolutionary, though a non-violent one. As the years pass and as the situation in India is increasingly becoming a challenge to all Constructive Workers, Kumarappa will certainly combine the role of saint and revolutionary more and more authentically. His renunciation of Maganvadi and his new work in Seldoh is the symbol of what is yet to come from him. He is himself thus a challenge to all those who would take up to-day the new Cross and follow Gandhi. It is of profound significance that it is a Western-trained economist, an Indian Christian and a follower of Gandhi, who has to-day become the challenge and the symbol of what might yet be in the India of Gandhi.

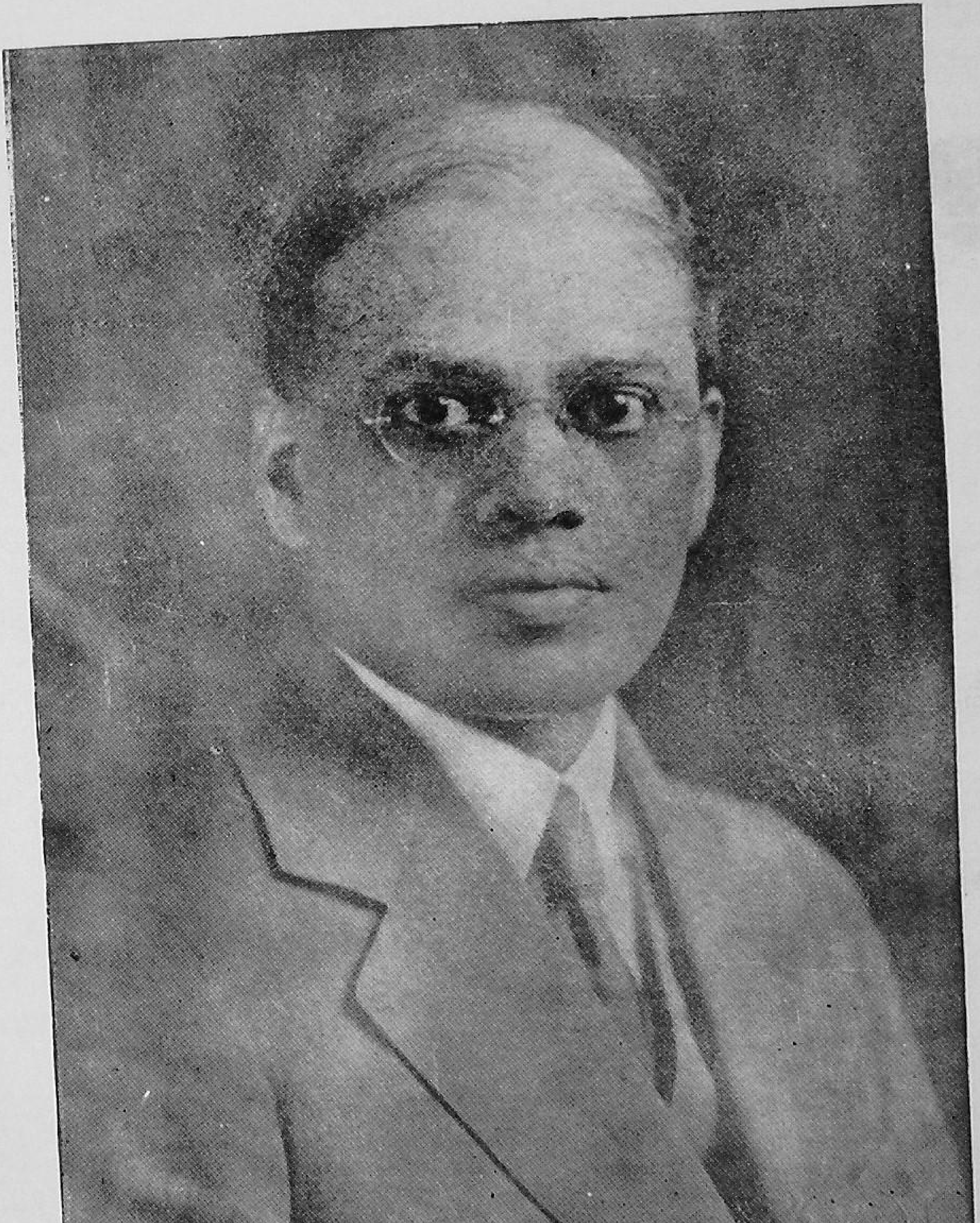
The Mother

Kumarappa as a Child of
5 months

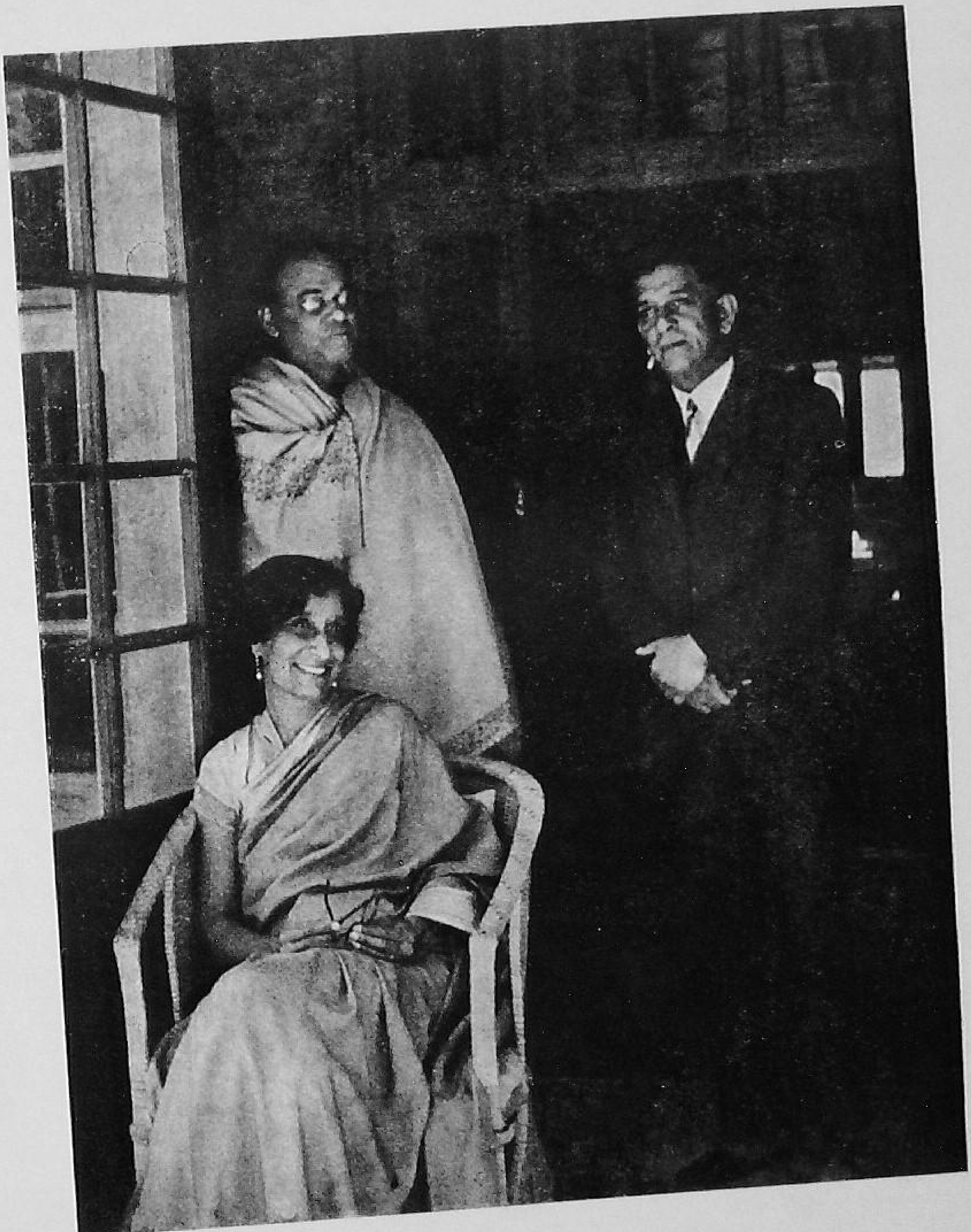


At the Age of Nine

At the Age of Nineteen



Kumarappa in the U. S. A. : 1927



With Smt. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur in Simla

PART TWO

EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES AND WRITINGS.

I

RELIGION

1. RELIGION AT THE MOTHER'S KNEE*

My mother was not a learned woman in the sense of possessing a university education. She came of a devout Christian stock of South India. She had read widely for her generation, especially in Tamil. She spent her life of comparative simplicity in the practice of the tenets of Jesus. Her piety, her sympathy for and love of her neighbours, she expressed by her attempt, however humble it may have been, to help those in distress. Her life and actions made an impression on my child mind much greater than many volumes of theology could have done. Her ways of inculcating religion were simple and unique.

As a child I was fond of pets. My mother encouraged me to breed poultry, turkeys, guinea fowls, etc. When she went to the market at the beginning of the month to get her monthly stores, she would take me with her to buy chicken feed. During the month I would sell the eggs and keep accounts and at the end of the month she would interest me in finding out what profit had been made.

* *The Practice and Precepts of Jesus.*

This profit had to be made over to her for being disbursed on simple charities like the support of an orphan child at some school. Even when I was grown up and working as a Public Auditor, on the first of the month I had to send her my "tithes" out of my income. This "tithe" did not mean a mathematical one tenth but was a liberal tax calculated by the needs of her charity budget! Once when I was spending a summer holiday with her at Kodaikanal in the early twenties, on a Sunday at church the announcement was made that China was visited by a terrible famine. That day, the noon dinner was a perfect feast. We could not assign any reason for its provocation. When we inquired, mother smilingly replied, "I shall explain later." We enjoyed our nap. Then at tea time, mother called us together and told us of this famine in China and contrasted it with the sumptuous meal we ourselves had enjoyed and invited us to help in feeding the distressed in China. She brought out a subscription list with amounts set against our several names according to her conception of our respective ability to pay down the sum immediately. She had put me down for fifty rupees and took it too! Besides such personal contributions she made us go round and collect from our friends also. She used the lever of her mother-love to goad us on. This was the home training.

* * * *

2. RELIGION IN EVERY WALK OF LIFE*

Thus the love of God has to be demonstrated by a devoted life spent in service of those in need. We ought to heal the sick and teach the unlettered. But, this is not all. As the life of man grows and society assumes more complicated aspects, the sphere of usefulness and service widens. To-day, great departments of life are crying out for selfless workers. Children of light are not to be confined to the parish compounds. Every walk of life needs their light and every department needs to be toned up by them, right through the great sweep of the social, political and economic

* *The Practice and Precepts of Jesus.*

world. Let us study in broad outline, a few spheres where such influence can be effectively used and then content ourselves with a few detailed instances presenting opportunities of service. Naturally, we restrict ourselves to conditions prevailing in our country.

As we have noticed, Jesus' mission is to shift the emphasis from the external control of life under the Law to self-discipline imposed by the Spirit within us. Such living will naturally and ultimately lead to complete control of our desires and not to indulgence of them. Hence, the present economy of the West based on the cultivation and the gratification of wants is diametrically opposed to the teachings of Jesus.

The charge of Jesus to the rich young ruler, "sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor", is not only applicable to the rich in material wealth but to every one who possesses something that others lack. That ruler happened to be rich in a special way. Silver and gold we may have none, but, such as we have, we are directed to use in the service of those in need of that special possession of ours as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. One may be rich in physical health and strength, in the rare gift of common sense, in possessing social influence, in sagacity, in having natural organizing powers, in inherent commercial ability and industrial foresight, in the enviable capacity to impart knowledge, in learning, in administrative skill, in some applied art—music, painting, sculpture, oratory, or in some professional training—Medicine, Law, etc., in the methods of research and investigation, in technical knowledge relating to agriculture, forestry, geology, pisciculture, etc. Whatever it be, we have to surrender it all without expecting a return.

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3. WHERE THE CHURCHES HAVE GONE WRONG*

The Jews regarded all members of their race as neighbours and all others as gentiles and natural enemies of Jehovah, their God. Hence the Jewish commandment, "Love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy." There was also the commandment, "Honour thy

* *The Practice and Precepts of Jesus.*

father and thy mother." Jesus extends such limited loyalties to cover all human beings.

When our life is sublimated by the Spirit of Truth, and our love encompasses the whole world, then humanity, as the creation of our Father in Heaven, constitutes our family circle. Black or white, brown, yellow or red, all are our brethren and we can have no enmity within this family. All personal relationships should be based on love, though we may hate certain evil deeds, systems and organizations and fight against these and try to exterminate them. As regards individuals, we have to do good to them that hate us, and pray for those that despitefully use us and persecute us.

These high ideals and precepts could have been brushed aside as impracticable had not Jesus Himself set us an example by His life as to how to practise these. He healed the ear of Malchus, the servant of the High Priest, when he came to arrest Him. When He was spat upon and smitten He did not resist the injury. On the Cross He prayed for the forgiveness of those who crucified Him.

When our life is guided by such high ideals as stars, is it possible for us to find fault with our neighbour ? We shall feel too humiliated at our own shortcomings to sit in judgment over others. The beam in our eyes will shut our vision from noticing the mote in our neighbour's eye. Like the publican, we shall not dare even to raise our eyes to heaven, but shall beat out breasts and say, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," (Luke XVIII. 13).

These precepts, however lofty they may be, do not determine, once and for all, the shores of the spiritual ocean. Those who hold that Jesus gave the final and complete revelation and that there is no further scope for further developments, do Him a grave injustice, unknowingly though it may be. Great masters are limited by the capacity of their pupils. Such masters can only lay down broad principles along the lines of which further experiments may be made to explore deeper into truth. The function of the master is not merely to bequeath a store of knowledge to his pupils but to instil in them a thirst for truth and inspiration, and drill them in proper methods of research. Thenceforward the pupils should go full speed ahead on their own steam. Does the quantitative knowledge in Physics stop where Newton left it ? Do our modern

physicists sit and watch apples fall? Has not Einstein opened up newer fields? The great contribution of the late Acharya P. C. Ray was not so much in his own researches, great as they have been, but rather in the creation of a band of able scientists to carry on his tradition. No less can Jesus' claims be. At the time of His advent the Jews were a narrow-minded race, obsessed with a racial superiority—like that of the Nazis over the Jews—and they inherited a most violent tradition. Even the few disciples He had were mostly a group of fisherfolk, for the most part practically unlettered. Within His ministry, of hardly three years, to have taught them what He did, was one of His greatest miracles, and the ideals and principles He set forth were in themselves revolutionary. Is it to be wondered then that He found that His disciples could not take in and digest all He had to say and that He had to leave them with a promise that when they got the Spirit of Truth more things would be revealed to them? His revelation was, therefore, partial, being naturally limited by the capacity of His disciples. (See John XVI 12, 13) How then can we claim finality for His revelation?

If Jesus' promise is to find fulfilment, those who profess to follow Him ought to find new facets of truth opened to them as they advance on the route indicated by their Master. Unfortunately, man is so constituted that if he does not progress he does not merely stagnate but deteriorates. To justify the trust and responsibility reposed in him, man has to make use of his talents. That is the condition of all advance. In the Parable of the Talents the servant who buried his talent in the earth hoping to preserve it is condemned (Matt. XXV. 24, 30). The Churches which claim finality for Jesus' revelation are in this position. The tragedy of it all is the Churches usurped the place of the Spirit of Truth and professed authority to lay down the way of life for all. Anything new from any other source was considered heretic and was suppressed with all the violence human ingenuity could devise. The results have been a terrible backsliding from the standards of Jesus. As proof, behold the battlefields of Europe.

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4. (a) TRUE STANDARD OF VALUES*

Jesus evaluated things according to the use they were to individual human beings. To him the widow's two mites were more than all the rest, for, she of her penury had cast in all the living that she had. If we love our neighbours as ourselves we shall be able to realise and appreciate the true value of all that we possess. If we long for articles that are made by depriving nations of their freedom, by resorting to violence, by devouring widows' houses, by taking the taxes from the poor to serve the needs of the rich, we shall be ignoring Jesus' standards, and gaining materially at the cost of the suffering of others. As Solomon says:

"Better is little with the fear of the Lord
than great treasure and trouble therewith,
"Better is little with righteousness
than great revenues without right".

Shall we save our life or lose it? If we are convinced that the present atmosphere of war is caused by the desire to control raw materials and markets we shall be parties to violence and bloodshed, if we subscribe to it by buying or selling goods made under such methods. So if we wish to usher in peace and goodwill among nations we shall have to remember that the Master we profess to follow had not where to lay his head. The servant cannot be greater than the master. What shall be our choice? The broad path or the narrow way? Hitler or Gandhiji? Barabbas or Jesus? The sword or the ploughshare?

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4. (b) THE SPIRITUAL EYE†

There is an incident recorded of how once King David, one of the greatest rulers of the Jews, was arrayed against his formidable enemies, the Philistines whose armies had encamped between him and his city—Bethlehem. From his camp the King could see

* *The Practice and Precepts of Jesus.*
† *Economy of Permanence.*

the well outside Bethlehem beyond the enemy camp. The King in a sentimental mood exclaimed, "Oh, for a drink of cold water from that well." Some of the valiant soldiers, who heard this wish of the King, set out to fulfil the royal desire literally. They risked their lives through the enemy camp, reached the well, and brought back to the King a pot of water from that well and placed it before him. The King was much touched by the devotion and loyalty of the soldiers who placed such little value on their own lives and ventured forth to satisfy the passing wish of their King. The spiritual eye of the King saw in that pot, not pure cold water, but the life-blood of the men who had gone to procure it. He picked up the pot and being much moved, said, "How can I drink this ? It contains not water but the blood of my beloved soldiers ? If I drink it, it will be a curse to me. I pour it out to God as their sacrifice and noble offering".

The more our actions are based on such spiritual appraisal, which values objects in their true setting and perspective, the purer our lives will be and surer will be the foundations of the road to an economy of permanence, leading humanity to happiness and peace through the medium of non-violence.

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5. WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT ?*

In the House of Lords speaking on the atomic energy the Most Reverend, the Archbishop of York suggested that if negotiations between Truman, Attlee and Stalin should fail, then those nations willing to submit to an atomic authority should do so without waiting for Russia and be in a position to confront any potential aggressor with an overwhelming deterrent force". Has His Grace so quickly forgotten the lessons of the last two global wars, or does he believe in getting in the blow first ? It appears to us that the nations of the world are being blindfolded to the lessons brought home to us by the last two wars, that force does not solve the problems between nations. Already people in the know are

* Article in *Gram Udyog Patrika*

talking of the third world war. Premier George Drew of Ontario speaking in Toronto early this week said, "We must realise that we are at war to-day and let us not baulk at that word. Hundreds of millions of people are being held in slavery and two hundred millions more are under the threat of slavery. There is much talk of the world being divided into two kinds of ideologies, but there never was such a simple division as now—not just of ideology, but an irreconcilable difference between two ways of life". Yes, it is the two ways of life that are in conflict today; the one believes in gaining the whole material world for oneself and the other abhors violence even if it be at the cost of renouncing the world.

The people who would gain the world have forgotten that the means of violence, even from the materialistic point of view, is not worth the candle. Great Britain is squandering about 700 millions on military commitments. The Air Force itself accounts for about 170 millions. The Army clamours for over 500 millions and the Navy of course is the pet boy on whom not enough could be lavished. These figures mean nothing unless they indicate that so much of the productive power of the country is being diverted towards destruction and these figures naturally take no account of the enormous loss of human life. Unless the nations wake up betimes we shall again be plunged into the cauldron from which there will be no escape this time.

India itself is being dragged into this whirlpool of violence. Our military expenditure, in a budget under a national government, is soaring high. As far as we can see, the powers that are interested in enriching themselves are extremely busy fomenting the type of industrialisation that will plunge us headlong over the precipice.

The "Industrial Policy", outlined by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru recently, gives us no hope that the government are aware of the dangers lurking beneath such a "Policy". Statements and actions of government indicate that there is no considered policy in regard to the economic development of the country. The government appears to be guided mainly by the exigencies of the case. Whichever interest happens to be vociferous at the time obtains a promise that will suit the party, irrespective of the effect on

the country as a whole. This programme of drifting along the current will not avail us much. What is wanted is a definite philosophy, which will envisage the future of our country and indicate the means of attaining it, and all other considerations must be secondary to this main objective. Given such an objective our country can enunciate a policy which will not only bring peace and stability to our own land but will also usher hope into a world distorted with suspicion and fear.

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6. THE NEO-SERMON ON THE MOUNT *

Jesus, in his simplicity and ignorance of world affairs, taught us in byegone days to love our enemies and to do good to them that hate us. "Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also", said the carpenter's son. But then, He had not the advantage of studying modern diplomacy at the feet of His Grace Dr. Cyril Garbett, the Archbishop of York.

This second custodian of the soul of the Church of England, making his presidential address to the Convocation of York, devoted much time to define the duties of a Christian. He said, "The Christian should support the United Nations as an attempt to limit national sovereignty. Unless the veto is restricted the United Nations will fail, as the League of Nations had failed to preserve peace.

"The Christian must press strongly for the outlawry of the Atomic Bomb. Its use in war may result in the end of our civilisation and reversion of those who survive to primitive conditions of existence.

"In an armed world, the Democratic State must also be armed. Weakness and timidity encourage an aggressor, while protests and arguments excite his contempt, unless behind them there stands the resolution of an armed people ready to fight, suffer and die, rather than passively submit to the murder of their nation and the enslavement of its citizens.

* *Gram Udyog Patrika*

"In supporting the Government in taking all necessary precautions against attack, we shall do so without hatred for any nation."

The last sentence is a master stroke to reconcile the "turning the left cheek" philosophy with the Atom Bomb diplomacy. Hiroshima experience tells us what to expect from this doctrine. Let us pray in sackcloth and ahses. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil". May God also save us from such leadership.

* * * *

7. CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER RELIGIONS *

In the religion of Jesus there is no intolerance of other forms of religion. He was very impatient of over-zealous Jews, because of their narrow religious outlook. He himself sent his disciple to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and not to the Gentiles. He denounced the Scribes and Pharisees, "for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte and when he is made ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves."

The religion of Jesus was not exclusive: "I say unto you, that men will come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out."

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus gives the place of honour and esteem to one who is not a Jew but the Harijan of the day. It indicates Jesus' desire to bring forward such despised people.

What weighs with Jesus is not the allegiance of any individual to any particular religion but the individual's attitude to his fellow men.

In the earlier part of the address, I had referred to Dr. Farquhar's "Crown of Hinduism". Now that we have analysed the Religion of Jesus we can understand why Dr. Farquhar was looking

* *Practice and Precepts of Jesus.*

for a head to place the crown. Although we said that Christianity may be looked upon as the Crown of Judaism, yet we cannot accept the personal religion of Jesus such as the one we have formulated here, as the crown of Christianity. Christianity has developed into a smug, comfortable, selfish and individualistic religion, seeking for its own gain, while the religion of Jesus requires for its growth the background of a collective social order, such as we find Hinduism has developed in India. To cite one instance, take even the joint family system, where the fit and the unfit, the rich and the poor, the gifted and the incapable, all live together and share a common purse. This system has its weakness, but it is distinctly an attempt towards loving the neighbour as thyself. Again, amongst the Musalmans there is neither black, white or brown, prince, peasant or pauper. All practise a democracy which puts to shame the race for the high places in Christianity. We can see Dr. Farquhar was conscious that there was a need for a head fitted to receive the Religion of Jesus, and found it not in Christianity, but in the social order evolved by Hinduism. Of course the pure personal religion of Jesus needs a sociological order suited to it to take root. As we have noticed, except in cases such as that of the Society of Friends, it does not find a congenial, well prepared ground to germinate in Western forms of modern Christianity.

We have looked at the religion of Jesus from various aspects. When we study the pure form, we notice in every feature of it a similarity to the culture of India. On the other hand, Christianity, as we see around us, is totally foreign to our culture. The gorgeous ceremonies, the dependence on the priesthood, the aggressive proselytizing spirit and the obeisance the Church pays to the State are not found in our land. Amongst us, individual or family worship, with simple forms and rites, performed by the devotee himself, without the intervention of a priest, commonly in the home itself, is the general form of worship. Westerners have centralized even their religion. In every walk of life our ways are decentralized; so was that of Jesus. The religion of Jesus was highly individualistic, while the Christian churches are masterpieces of centralized organization and administration. They have turned Marthas; Marys

will flourish only in the religion of Jesus. Even for the worker the way prescribed by Jesus is much the same as is practised today in India. "Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till ye go thence." To this day our social workers depend on such hospitality. Can the churches afford to follow Jesus literally here ? In India it is nothing strange. Poverty, prescribed by Jesus, is honoured in our land. The churches cannot carry on their work on that basis. All these variations prove how far from the religion of Jesus the churches have drifted. In the Indian culture the fields are ready unto harvest for the pure religion of Jesus, but there is no room for modern Christianity.

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8. SOFT PEDAL DIFFERENCES *

The human heart naturally turns against conflict in any form, provided there are no sadistic tendencies. Such latter cases may be regarded as pathological. This natural trend leads men everywhere to seek out ways of peace. There are organised efforts to promote peace and each unit pursues its own light. There is safety in numbers but there is also a real danger of magnifying our own myopia, which, without the least intention on our part, may direct us on the war path unwittingly. Great caution is indicated when we preach peace, that we do not sow seeds of war.

In the West there are a few bodies working towards attaining unity among the nations and promoting goodwill. The Society of Friends, The Peace Pledge Union, The War Resisters' International and the Fellowship of Reconciliation are amongst such. About a month ago an addition was made to these by forming "The Indian Fellowship of Reconciliation", at a conference presided over by Miss Muriel Lester, at the Christava Seva Ashram, Manganam, Travancore.

When we examine it closely there is nothing much "Indian" about it, as it follows closely the preamble, aims and objects of the Western edition. It is Indian in so far as it is intended

* Article in *Harijan*

to function in India. Apart from this, for all intents and purposes, it is but a branch of the Western Unit.

In the West the generality of the people, though not actual professing Christians, have a background of Christian teachings and influence. Therefore, any reference to Jesus is pertinent and conveys a definite message and therefore is helpful.

But in India, the home of many religions and tolerance, the special reference in the prelude to Jesus in the clause dealing with the aims and objects of the Indian Fellowship of Reconciliation, which runs as follows, "I believe that love as demonstrated in Jesus Christ is the only adequate basis of life for personal, social, economic, national and international relationships," is unintendedly dangerous. It smacks of sectarianism—the fountain head of fanaticism and conflict. In our opinion there is no call for citing any particular brand of Love! The all-embracing love of the Universal Father of Mankind is common ground. Anything narrower than this is bound to create dissensions. We understand a protest was lodged at the meeting about this seed of conflict at the very inception of this Fellowship but in vain. We feel that at a time like the present, when the world is choked with weeds of violence, we cannot be too careful to avoid every path of sectarianism leading to bigotry and disturbance of the peace of the nations, and that also in the name of the Prince of Peace who taught us tolerance as the basis of all worship of the Eternal and the Universal Father when he directed the Samaritan woman to worship God, neither at Jerusalem nor at Jericho, nor in this church nor in that temple, but everywhere in Spirit and in Truth. To teach or even suggest anything else is tantamount to a denial of the Christian approach. May we humbly plead that this outmoded approach to religion, based on a form of "Superiority Complex" may now be abandoned yielding place to greater understanding and thus making for tolerance and true reconciliation. We submit there can be no basis for any reconciliation without an out and out attempt to understand that which the other party holds to be true and basic. It is not too late to retrace our steps if we have the best interests of all at heart. We should soft pedal differences and seek out common ground if we would promote "Goodwill among men".

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9. SATYAGRAHA AND THE CHURCH IN INDIA *

(Being the correspondence between the Most Rev. Dr. F. Westcott, Lord Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India, and J. C. Kumarappa, during April and May 1930.)

PREFATORY NOTE

The Civil Disobedience movement of 1930 was started by Gandhiji's march to Dandi and the Salt Satyagraha. The Government, in its attempt to suppress it, used all manner of means which were objectionable. The following appeal was sent to Christian Missionaries, with personal letters to a few church dignitaries. This led to the correspondence with the Most Rev. F. Westcott, Lord Bishop of Calcutta, and Metropolitan of India, which was published in part, in some of the Diocesan Magazines and other journals, and in full in *Young India*, of June 26th 1930, and which is now here reprinted.

Maganvadi, Wardha. J. C. KUMARAPPA.

AN APPEAL TO ALL CHRISTIAN WORKERS AND MISSIONARIES.

Dear Friends,

We are at present passing through one of the greatest crises in India's long history, a crisis that bids fair to leave its mark not only on India but on humanity itself. The days when personal differences were fought out by duels is practically a thing of the past. Private individuals no longer appeal to brute force. But nations are still resorting to barbarous methods of violence; and might is right in international disputes. There has been a race for armaments in spite of repeated efforts at reducing them since the World War. There is no need for me to point out, at this late hour, that warfare reduces us to the level of brutes, and mechanized warfare one even below that. We need to exert ourselves to rise to, at least, a human level, if not to a spiritual plane. Enlightened men

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* *Christianity-Its Economy and Way of life*

the world over have been striving for what William James calls "a moral equivalent for warfare", as a means of settling national disputes. Before our very eyes Gandhiji is substituting for warfare the gospel of love in a practical way.

The details may have to be worked out to a great degree of refinement before Satyagraha can be used on an universal scale, but the basic principle is the one that concerns us vitally this moment.

What is going to be the contribution of those of us who profess to follow the Prince of Peace whose banner is love? At this juncture a great responsibility is laid on our shoulders which we dare not shirk. Here is an opportunity at our very door, the like of which Christendom has never faced before. Do we not hear the Man of Sorrows say, "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me"? The choice is imminent.

I am perfectly aware that our political views may honestly differ and we may be poles apart. Amongst Christians, there are Indians and foreigners, and those who see eye to eye with the national movement, and those who may honestly believe that the Nationalists are misled. But there can be no difference of opinion regarding non-violence amongst those who were enjoined by their Master, "Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also", and to return good for evil.

No appeal is necessary to those who are in full agreement with Gandhiji, and who are convinced that this movement is to clothe the naked and feed the hungry, as these friends are committed to non-violence.

My appeal is mainly to those who differ from the national cause. They have a great function to perform. I know some of the foreign Missionary friends are here under a contract with the British Government not to interfere in politics. But where non-interference means compromising a principle which they hold fundamental, I submit that they are bound in loyalty to their Lord to impress upon their Government the duty of adopting non-violent methods, even at the risk of their very lives. I am quite conscious that theirs is a more difficult task than swimming with the current

of the national movement but I am certain that the greater task offers a greater opportunity to "let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven".

In today's issue of *Young India* there are cited numerous cases of brutalities practised by the police. I give here the following two reports only:

From Delhi:

"The volunteers were wounded as the police tried to wrest from our hands a bucket of salt. Only after they had belaboured us to their hearts' content could they dispossess us of our salt......Among the wounded five were seriously injured. They had been heavily belaboured on the chest and the abdomen. Two received severe injuries on their private parts."

From Dholera:

"Eight to ten policemen fell upon Ambalal. They brutally pressed his testicles, struck him with fists on the chest and abdomen, pressed their fingernails on his neck, so much so that Ambalal fell senseless. Mr. .... and others quietly witnessed the brutality."

After these accounts no more words from me will be needed to commend to your Christian spirit the noble cause of non-violence. As far as the Satyagrahis themselves are concerned they pride in their tribulations and thank God for the opportunity of suffering much for what they hold to be a righteous and sacred cause, like the early Christian martyrs. But that does not condone the violence on the Government's side. I am confident that no true Christian, be he Indian or foreign, will leave a stone unturned in finding ways and means of persuading the Government to use human methods in their attempt to "maintain law and order".

17th April, 1930.

Yours sincerely,

JOSEPH CORNELIUS UMARAPPA.

* * * *

19th April, 1930.

Most Rev. Dr. F. Westcott,
Lord Bishop of Calcutta and
Metropolitan of India, Calcutta.

Dear Dr. Westcott,

Yesterday I posted to you a copy of my appeal to Christians and Missionary bodies. I am enclosing another for ready reference.

It seems a terrible reflection that a Government responsible to a nation that supports the Christian Church as a national institution should perpetuate such atrocities and especially on non-Christians. This will do incalculable damage to the cause of the Christian Church in India. If the Church does not register its protest—and that right early—and urge the Government to at least follow the lead in non-violence given by Gandhiji, great service may be rendered even by getting resolutions passed by the various Christian organizations and forwarding copies of these to the Government and to the press.

May I respectfully point out that with Christians non-violence cannot be treated as a matter of policy. It is one of the basic principles inculcated and practised by Christ. If this be so then it is incumbent upon the Church, I submit, to undertake to propagate the principle of non-violence. Should not something constructive be done to organise a permanent movement having for its object the promotion of non-violent methods of settling disputes ? I am addressing Bishop Fisher and others on this subject, but as nothing can give this movement a greater impetus than a definite lead from you I trust this matter will receive your prayerful consideration and then, I am persuaded, you will see your way made clear to undertake this responsibility.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
J. C. KUMARAPPA.

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Bishop's House, Calcutta.
24th April, 1930.

My dear sir,

I received your letter of the 19th inst. and no doubt you write to me as one who has known Mahatma Gandhi for some years and who deeply appreciated the service he was rendering for the social uplift of the depressed classes and for racial unity in India. As a social reformer, he had my whole-hearted support, for in doing that he seemed to me to be truly following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, but now you ask me to support him when he has, unlike Jesus Christ, identified himself with the political aspirations of the Nationalists. You will remember the multitudes sought Jesus Christ to make Him their king, that He might lead them to assert their national independence and secure their freedom from Roman rule. This, He absolutely refused to do, regarding it as a temptation of the devil to be resisted.

You seem to assert that our Lord would have approved civil disobedience and would have called upon Governments when any of their subjects deliberately violated the laws of the country to go on and break others with impunity. It is hard to understand how you could imagine that this is God's way of ordering His world. When I look to nature, I find that what we call "Natural Law" is absolutely fixed and reliable. On that fixity of law depends our power of carrying on our daily work, and the research students depend upon it for making further discoveries. I remember well Father Wagget saying to a great meeting in the Albert Hall, "that if butter was sometimes as hard as iron and iron was sometimes as soft as butter, at the same temperature, we could make neither a bridge nor a breakfast." Can we expect that Jesus Christ who came to reveal the character of God would so utterly repudiate this revelation of God given us in nature ? We know he did not, for again, He exhorted His disciples to obey the law. When the Pharisees wished to place Him in a dilemma, they asked him whether it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not, and He

asked them to show Him a current coin. They showed Him one, with Caesar's likeness on it. His reply was, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." You avail yourself of the safety which a stable Government affords you and of all the services which it provides for your convenience, but think you are at liberty to violate its laws with impunity. So far from encouraging any civil disobedience or religious disobedience, our Lord exhorted His disciples to obey the Scribes and Pharisees. He said, "Whatsoever they bid, that do and observe". Perhaps I need hardly remind you what St. Paul, a chosen witness of Jesus Christ, wrote to the Romans:

> "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God; and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work but to the evil."

Perhaps you recall our Lord's injunction to the individual which forbade him to retaliate for a wrong done to him. Our Lord bade him to win over the evil-doer by kindness and patience. He was not dealing at the time with the question of the maintenance of law and order in the State which finds its parallel in the natural order of the physical universe. A great deal of the suffering in the world is due to the violation of what we call "the Laws of Nature". Much of such violation is done in ignorance but yet penalty of that violation is exacted. In the present civil disobedience, there is no question of ignorance. It is deliberate and is intended to over-throw the Government. I do not wish to discuss further the question of salt-tax or the excise policy of the Government. That is beside the point. What I am protesting against is that you should think the teaching or example of Jesus Christ gives any warrant for the practice of civil disobedience.

Yours faithfully,

FOSS, CALCUTTA.

J. C. Kumarappa Esq., M. A., B. Sc.,
Gujarat Vidyapith,
Ahmedabad.

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2nd May, 1930.

Most Rev. Dr. F. Westcott,
Lord Bishop of Calcutta and
Metropolitan for India, Calcutta.

Dear Bro. Westcott,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 24th April, received yesterday. May I say how surprised I was to find you regaling me a homily on civil disobedience all through? I never even mentioned the words civil disobedience in my letter to you. What I wanted was not that you should support Gandhiji in his political campaign but that you should urge the Government to use non-violent methods. Surely any Christian on either side can do that even while vehemently condemning the other side. I do not for a moment imagine that was too much to be expected of the head of the Anglican Church in India. At present the inhuman methods used by the Government towards the Satyagrahis is unworthy of an opponent like Gandhiji, and no gentleman can countenance it, leave alone one who professes to follow the Prince of Peace, without a word of protest while such brutalities and tortures are being used. This attitude of callousness is tantamount to a denial of our Lord, more culpable than that of Peter's, and the only hope is that it may be followed by repentance and more ardent service as in the case of the rugged Apostle.

The next paragraph in my letter does not even refer to the present political situation but only to the application of the principle of non-violence in settling all manner of disputes. You have chosen to ignore this paragraph altogether. Perhaps you do not wish to follow Christ to the extent of non-violence. You will forgive me if I say that most of our missionaries and other leaders of the Christian Church seem to be Britishers first and Christians afterwards, if convenient. You remember how during the World War practically every pulpit was turned into a recruiting sergeant's platform and every Church service ended with that morbidly narrow nationalistic song, "God save the King," which embodies the "tribal

God" idea of King David. Christ's teachings are torn from the context and twisted passages are partially quoted to meet their national needs, and the flocks committed to their charge are being misled. This is a grave charge which seems to apply even to you, as I shall proceed to show presently. I do not know how far they are consciously guilty. They are themselves products of a civilization based on violence and so, are not able to fully appreciate and interpret Christ's clear teaching on this subject. May God forgive them for the mischief they are doing, perhaps with the best of intentions, in this land which holds even plant life sacred. As an individual, I should have hesitated to approach the throne of the Metropolitan of India, a prince among the prelates of the Church, in this fashion, had it not been for the authority of the New Testament; and on this ground, I would crave indulgence for anything that would have otherwise appeared presumptuous in this letter. Since you have yourself raised the question of civil disobedience I have no option left but to deal with your arguments.

Emanating from such an exalted source, the misapplication of Scripture incidents and partial quotations contained in your letter in support of your own ideas came as a great shock to me. You refer to the multitude seeking to make Jesus King, and you add, "that he might lead them to assert their national independence and secure their freedom from Roman rule. This, He absolutely refused to do, regarding it as a temptation of the devil to be resisted". May I refer you to the actual context and passage, John VI, 14 and 15, which follows on the description of the miracle of feeding of the five thousand men? "Then those men when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him and make him a king he departed again into a mountain himself alone."

The prophet they were expecting was the Messiah and the common conception was that he would be a temporal king and the context suggests clearly that these men were impelled by a purely selfish motive, feeding the body. These people wholly misunderstood His mission and His kingdom, which was not to be of this world,

and hence He departed. There is no mention, or even room to infer all you say about national independence and freedom, about Jesus regarding it as a temptation to be resisted. There is no idea of a temptation here at all.

Then later on you proceed to say "Our Lord exhorted his disciples to obey the Scribes and Pharisees". He said, "Whatsoever they bid, that do and observe". In other words you allocate to the bureaucracy in India the same place in the political order that the Scribes and Pharisees of old held in the Jewish organization. I am absolutely one with you in this, but I resent your partial quotation calculated to misinterpret Jesus. You omit the first part of his injunction and fail even to refer to the later parts of the chapter. Matt. XXIII, verse 2, says: "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat" and then comes the third verse: "All therefore whatsoever they bid that do and observe". That is, in so far as the Scribes and Pharisees are the custodians of Mosaic Law, which to the Jew was God-made Law, or we may term a higher moral law, He wants them to obey this. But He never enjoins them to blind obedience, as you will find right through the rest of the chapter one of the strongest condemnations of the Scribes and Pharisees usurping the place rightfully due to the Mosaic or God-given Law and prostituting it to suit their own selfish ends and devouring widows' houses. Most of the verses in this chapter begin with such biting words as "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites", "Woe unto you ye blind guides", "Ye fools and blind" and ends up with, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell". (And I say Amen to the bureaucrats of India). He has again and again exhorted them to "Beware of the Scribes and Pharisees". He never advocated blind obedience, such as you imply. He enjoined them to follow the God-given Law. In Matt. V. repeatedly you have verses beginning with "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time... But I say unto you etc.", and in verse 20, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the Kingdom of Heaven". Surely if they were to follow meekly the Scribes and Pharisees they cannot excel them. He inculcated the pursuit of a higher moral law and said, "Fear not them that kill the body but are not able to kill the soul but rather fear

Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell." This is enough as far as His precept goes, but let us see what his practice was. Did he himself obey the Scribes and Pharisees in all things, even where laws were immoral and anti-social? I need only refer you to the first few verses of Mark 3 where you will find a record of His civil disobedience against the Law of the Sabbath when He considered its operation anti-social. After spiritedly condemning it and the Scribes and Pharisees, He defiantly broke it by healing the man with a withered hand. His action so enraged the then custodians of "Law and Order" that the Pharisees "straight way took counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy him". Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Wherever the man-made law has proved to be immoral, as in the case of the Salt Tax, and anti-social, as in the case of the excise policy, the righting process will lead to a disturbance of the peace. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace but a sword." This is a solemn statement from the Prince of Peace. Do we not hear an echo of this last verse in Gandhiji's desire to present the Government of India with a string of broken heads? It is not the physical injury that matters but the fact that a broken head represents the zeal to do away with an immoral law. We hear a great deal of criticism on this much misunderstood statement of Gandhiji.

You appear to have terribly confused the ideas of "the Laws of Nature" and man-made laws, and attribute the same potency and virtue to both alike. "Law" in Science is but the observed uniform order of sequence and hence the "fixity" you talk about is a fixity only until a variation from this uniformity is noticed; then even this "fixity" has to be modified. Therefore even in natural law there is nothing that is "absolutely reliable", as you so innocently imagine. Man-made laws are only rules laid down for the regulation of society and as no man is infallible,—I am not sure what you think of the Pope—some of these regulations may be totally immoral or anti-social. Then what is our duty towards these? The example of Christ urges us to rise to that which is our highest light, irrespective of consequences.

You accuse the people of taking advantage of the services of the Government. Are these services offered gratis ? The way you speak of it one would imagine you were under that impression. Do you not realize, even at this late hour, that the very blood is squeezed out of the Indian peasant by way of taxes ? Even if I grant, for argument's sake, that the service we get is desirable, is there no idea of adequacy of payment ? I am sure you will be the last one to justify the late war on the score that it called forth some heroism occasionally. Surely the price was too heavy to pay. This is one of the bases of contention of the Satyagrahis. According to you it would seem that the Government exists that the people might obey it. "Man is made for the Sabbath" theory. A most pernicious way to look at the relationship - you cannot get anywhere with such ideas. Instead of Government bending to the will of the people the bureaucracy says, "We will crush them down to accept our mandates". The Indian citizen - indeed if he can be called a citizen and not a slave - is made for maintaining a Government and finally the British trade.

The Scribes and Pharisees used the law to serve their own ends. Our present day Pharisees are not to be outdone in this. Take for instance "justice". This should be no respector of persons. Yet Gandhiji and innumerable other Satyagrahis are free while the Government picks and chooses whom they may devour. Law is at present the faithful handmaiden of the executive to carry out its will. Government is not there to maintain "Law and Order", but the Law is there to maintain the Government. Is this not an anti-social state of affairs ?

To summarize the present movement in India, the Satyagrahis feel the anti-social nature of the whole system—Salt Tax, liquor sales etc.,—and realizing that at present man is made to be taxed, they are breaking such laws as are immoral (which question you conveniently refuse to discuss), not fearing them that can destroy the body by torture, machine guns and other accessories of "civilization", and the Pharisees—the bureaucrats—are taking counsel with the Herodians—Whitehall—as to how they may destroy the greatest apostle of Christ to India. Not the kind that says, "Lord, Lord",

but one that doeth the will of the Father is the same that Jesus owns to be his brother, sister and mother. You may ask how could I accuse Government of seeking to destroy him while he has been left unmolested. I have not seen Gandhiji since the campaign started, but I know the brutalities perpetrated on one of the least of the people will be an immeasurably greater torture to him than any that his hundred pounds of human flesh can be submitted to. The Satyagrahis follow Christ even to the court of the present day Pilates who rather than do justice and resign, stick to their posts and carry out the wishes of the powers that be. The Satyagrahis take no part in the proceedings, even as Christ refrained. "Then said Pilate unto Him, 'hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee ?' and He answered him never a word in so much that the Governor marvelled greatly."

Western civilization brings formalities even between Christians. Formerly, I addressed you "Dear Dr. Westcott" and signed myself 'Yours sincerely' but you begin, 'My dear Sir' and end 'Yours faithfully', but you will allow me to follow Matt. XXIII. 8 and address you 'Brother' and sign myself,

Yours Fraternally,

J. C. KUMARAPPA.

II

ECONOMICS

1. GANDHIAN ECONOMICS

Anything Gandhian must necessarily be a derivative of Truth and Non-violence. Therefore, Gandhian Economics must be Economics purged of untruth and violence. Hence to study this subject we shall have to pause a while to search our present organizations for manifestations of untruth and violence in our economic dealings with our fellows.

Gandhiji is not interested in purely academic treatment of a subject. At every turn he is anxious to see how our action tells on our neighbours. He does not look at life in water-tight compartments but as one whole. Therefore, the moral and social implications of economic activity cannot be considered apart from Economics.

As every school boy has learnt, Economics is a science which deals with how man goes about to satisfy his needs. This activity will bring man into frequent touch—co-operation or conflict—with his fellows. Gandhian Economics will strive to enunciate principles which,

when carefully followed, will allow man to satisfy his needs without injuring his neighbours, and at best, while helping the fellowmen.

Our considerations cannot cease there. We have also to follow how the man reacts to his own work. Our daily round of duties is as much a part of ourselves as our physical body. Man expresses himself by his works and at the same time builds his personality by his acts whether such acts be classified moral, political, social or economic. Hence what occupation we follow is not merely a means of earning our daily bread but is a form of a very effective method of adult education.

Taken in this setting, the standards of value we use cannot be purely materialistic. It has to measure the repercussions of man's activity in the different spheres of life, which will naturally mean that money consideration can never have the final word in deciding the questions that face us.

Beyond the pale of human society are our mute brethren who minister to our needs—animals, birds etc. – which have also to be dealt with consideration. The land we draw our sustenance from, the water, sunlight, air and the rest of the physical world claim our attention and regard while we strive to satisfy our needs. If we fail to consider these factors, nature will retaliate with violence in the form of pain, disease and death.

Taking all these factors into consideration man has to pick his way through, skilfully, so as to obtain the greatest benefit to himself with the least harm to others and the minimum of disturbance of the natural order. The ideal position would be where man works in complete alignment with Nature.

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2. THE ECONOMY OF PEACE AND PERMANENCE

In animate life, the secret of nature's permanency lies in the cycle of life by which the various factors function in close co-operation to maintain the continuity of life. A grain of wheat falls from the parent plant. It gets buried in the earth, sends out

roots into the soil and through them absorbs nutritive elements with the aid of moisture and the heat of the sun. It sprouts up into a plant by this process. The plant shoots out leaves which help to gather nourishment from the air and light, as the roots do from the soil. When some of these leaves "die", they fall to the ground and are split up or decomposed into the various elements which the parent plant had absorbed from the soil, air, and light. This is again used to nourish the next generation of plants. The bees etc., while gathering the nectar and pollen from these plants for their own good, fertilize the flowers, and the grains that are formed in consequence, again become the source of life of the next generation of plants. When ready, this seed falls to the ground and comes to life with the help of the soil that has already been enriched by fallen leaves of the previous generation of plants. Thus a fresh cycle of life begins once again. In this manner, life in nature goes on, and as long as there is no break in this cycle, the work in nature continues endlessly, making nature permanent.

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"Work" in nature consists in the effort put forth by the various factors—insentient and sentient—which co-operate to complete this cycle of life. If this cycle is broken, at any stage, at any time, consciously or unconsciously, violence results as a consequence of such a break. When violence intervenes in this way, growth or progress is stopped, ending finally in destruction and waste. Nature is unforgiving and ruthless. Therefore, self-interest and self-preservation demand complete non-violence, co-operation and submission to the ways of nature if we are to maintain permanency by non-interference with, and by not short-circuiting, the cycle of life.

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This complete non-violent co-operation between the various units is not always present in all forms of life. Some units, instead of passing through the different stages in nature, drawing their sustenance from the elements and insentient creatures, short-circuit the long process by preying on their fellow creatures. Here too, violence interposes with its accompaniment of destruction.

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Even the animal is capable of being classified into various groups according to the purpose of its work. Taking us at the animal level, we work to satisfy our hunger. Animals go about to satisfy their main primary need by, say, five different approaches. The first one is the simplest. The tiger goes and takes other creatures that live in the jungle. This is the parasitic state. Then there comes the predatory stage – the monkey takes the apple from the tree. It does not consider if it has done any work for it. Here, the violence of the tiger is lessened. But in both there is consumption without contribution. Thirdly, the bird that builds a nest, in economic terms, is both a producer and a consumer, and here is a further decrease of violence. This might be called the "enterprising stage". The fourth stage is noticed in the life of the honey bees. They don't produce for their own benefit; they produce for the benefit of the whole group. Then we come to the final stage, the service stage, as when the mother bird picks up food and takes it to the baby birds in the nest and gives without expecting any return.

We shall function in these five stages at different times. The moment we begin to develop the people towards the service stage, we are reducing the need for and chances of war. The nearer we get to the service stage, the less and less violence we shall find in society.

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The main trouble with man arises out of the fact that he is endowed with a "Freewill" and possesses a wide field for its play. By exercising this gift in the proper way he can consciously bring about a much greater co-operation and co-ordination of nature's units than any other living being. Conversely, by using it wrongly he can create quite a disturbance in the economy of nature and in the end destroy himself.

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As we have already noticed, man is distinguished by the gift of freewill, and, by the exercise of it, he can change his environment and circumstances with the help of the intelligence he is endowed with. Herein lies the difference between man and the other orders.

A dacoit or robber, who belongs to the parasitic economy may, by changing his mode of life, become less violent and set himself up as an absentee landlord who gets his rent without any personal contribution or labour, thus rising into the next higher Economy of Predation.

Or, he may decide to make an honest living as an agriculturist or as an artisan, putting forth his own effort and making a livelihood by the sweat of his brow. He would then have climbed into the third type – the Economy of Enterprise.

He may become a responsible member of a Hindu joint family, working for the dependent members and sharing the income he enjoys with all the members. He would have then reached the Economy of Gregation.

By developing a deep love for his fellowmen, he may be transformed into a national worker, spending his best efforts in a noble cause, leading a simple and frugal life. He would now attain a position in the highest type – the Economy of Service.

All this is within the range of possibility, provided the needed self-control and discipline is forthcoming, and the individual submits himself to the law of his being and steers his will power, so as to attain that which is highest.

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Just as an individual can pass from one type of economy into another, so also a group of individuals, or even the human race as a whole, can advance collectively from one type of economy to another, emphasizing in its collective life the peculiar characteristics of the economy to which it belongs. Therefore, it is possible to determine what stage of human development a certain group or nation has attained by examining the traits that its collective life and its relationship to other groups or nations discloses.

For the purpose of our analysis we may divide the devious route civilization has followed into three stages – the primitive or the animal stage, the modern or the human stage, and the advanced or spiritual stage. With reference to the five types of

economies we previously considered, it may be taken generally that the first two types of economies, *viz.* the "Parasitic" and the "Predatory" characterize the primitive or animal stage of civilization; the next two, *viz.* those of "Enterprise" and "Gregation" indicate the modern or human stage, and the last, *viz.* that of "Service" the advanced or the spiritual stage. The first is definitely transient and violent, the second also is transient with a large element of violence, although also with a growing desire for permanency and non-violence, while the last makes for peace, permanence and non-violence.

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3. STANDARD OF LIVING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

It is difficult even to understand what people mean when they talk of a standard of living. It is a delightfully vague term. Hence it becomes convenient to bandy these words about without fear of committing oneself to anything definite. Each person may have his own notion of a standard of living nd as to what it comprises. To one a radio set and a motor car may fall within the barest minimum. To another two meals a day may be a rare luxury. Therefore, it is necessary to work out an objective standard, taking into consideration the conditions obtaining in our land. Should this standard have an economic basis or follow cultural considerations or social needs? What is meant by "high" or "low" standards? By the former is it meant the full satisfaction of a wide range of material wants and by the latter a very limited enjoyment of worldly goods?

In previous chapters we have discussed the many ways of looking at life and their respective scales of values. We have come to the conclusion that life is not to be valued purely on a monetary basis nor by what looms large in the immediate present, but that a well-balanced economy leading to permanence and non-violence calls for a comprehensive consideration of various factors making life broad based. In such an economy money is of the least

importance. "Man does not live by bread alone", but by everything that affords him opportunities for the free expression of the whole man—his body, mind and spirit—for all that will make him approach perfection.

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Our life does not consist in the multitude of things we possess. Our life is something higher than material possessions, and our life is also to be looked at from the possibilities of development of our personality. The personality of an individual does not require for its development the satisfaction of a multiplicity of wants. In fact, the simpler the life the more conducive it is for exercising the higher faculties. The phrase "to plan for the future of our country" commonly used by people to denote the betterment of the life of the people, is often misleading. They also talk, constantly, of "raising the standard of living". In a country like ours, where people live on the margin of subsistence, any such raising of the standard of living must refer to the satisfaction of the primary needs, and not the acquisition of new habits. The term "high standard of living" is often made use of to connote a life led with a desire to satisfy a multiplicity of wants, and it has no reference to the qualitative condition of life. It refers to the quantitative aspect of one's existence. Therefore, the more accurate way of describing this position would be to talk of a "complex life" and a "simple life", rather than a "high" and a "low" standard. Simply because a British Tommy requires a hundred and one things for his apparel, food, drinks, smokes, etc., it does not mean his standard of living is "high", as compared to the life of, say, a person like Gandhiji. We may say that Gandhiji's is a "high" standard of living, while referring to the quality of life he leads, and a "simple" life referring to his material wants; while that of a British Tommy would be a "low" standard of life qualitatively and a "complex" standard quantitatively. Hence, what we want to give our people is a high standard of life which will be simple. A great many possessions of material wealth will choke human life with the cares and worries attached to them. With such possessions and encumbrances, man is not free to think his higher thoughts and to develop freely, and hence

a complex standard is like shackles to a man. It cramps his higher self from free development.

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The interested parties glibly talk of creating leisure for the housewife by introducing labour saving devices, but no sooner is a machine allowed to oust human labour than some other invention is brought in to absorb the money and time saved by the former device, leaving the second state of the housewife worse than the first.

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Has the standard of living of the gardener's wife changed so as to allow her opportunities for the free play of her higher faculties ? Has this complex standard given her more time for thought and reflection ? On the other hand, as she has to attend to everything single-handed she may have no time even to look into a magazine. She drudges from morn till night. All this for what ? Her time is filled up with work that brings little of real life. Is this "living", in the proper sense of the word ? It is worse than mere existence.

The simple life, on the other hand, can be "high" and present all that is finest in human life, perhaps, even better than a complex life, which latter kills personality as it follows ways set by others.

Such "high" standards are advocated, not for the betterment of the people from altruistic motives, but to serve the selfish ends of interested parties. Manufacturers, apart from diverting servants into factory hands, paralyse the freedom of action and movement of their employees by such standards being set up. The bargaining power of labour is reduced in the proportion in which material standards are raised.

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Frequently, the standard of life is described in terms of money and materials without any reference to the lives of those around us. Such standards are artificial and so are unstable and being superimposed and superficial will not be permanent, having no

root in the very life of the people. The British gardener's standard of life is laid out in that fashion. Such lead to regimentation and standardization which are soul-killing.

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What we need to do is to take care of the minimum that is essential, and direct the productivity of the people by conditioning their environments and making raw materials etc. available to them, and then safely leave the rest to their initiative and their ingenuity without further interference.

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If we increase productivity of the masses and direct consumption, so as to afford a ready local market, the standard of living of the people will automatically rise. Such a natural formation of a standard will proclaim the culture and genius of the people, and will be permanent being rooted in the life of the people.

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4. "DEMAND"—A MISNOMER

The consumer has no voice in calling for his goods. His side of the transaction is misnamed by learned "Economists" as the Demand. He makes no demand. He meekly takes what is presented to him. The cart is put before the horse. Shoes may be prepared in Northampton, England, by the workers who never have any contact with the consumer in India or some other remote corner of the earth. Instead of shoes being made to fit the consumers' feet, the consumer has to go to a shop and fit his foot into a ready-made shoe of the nearest shape available. If sufficient customers' feet are not available in the market under the influence of the makers, then, some country, like Abyssinia, where "natives" go barefooted, has to be brought under political control and "civilized" so that the people may be taught to wear western types of footwear. This chase of the pre-existent supply for a demand is one of the most fruitful sources of modern conflicts and wars. The unnatural

creation of a demand generates violence and produces an unstable equilibrium. In the effort to right itself, the swing again causes violence.

If we seek to obtain permanence and non-violence, we must have an order in which the customer will play the leading role and that personally. This can only be achieved when consumption goods are locally made, perhaps in cottages, under the eye of the consumer, to meet the existing needs. Only under such conditions can the consumer bring into effect his scale of values which will develop, as well as express, his personality. Modern forms of production and sale have reduced life into stagnation and living into mere existence. The atmosphere is suffocative. It can be cleared by those who have the needed gifts to belong to this House of Creation, asserting their personalities and arousing themselves to action. The monetary scale of values, which has taken complete possession of this House, has to be ousted and the manifold scale of cultural values has to be installed and given full sway over the conditions that affect the life of the people in general.

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5. THE DUTIES OF A CONSUMER

A buyer hardly realises he owes any duties at all in his every day transactions. Just as much of the guilt of murder is attached to the necklace wrung from the child, every article in the bazar has moral and spiritual values attached to it. To put it in a sort of legalistic language, the seller transfers his title, good or bad, to the buyer. Hence, it behoves us to enquire into the antecedents of every article we buy. This is a grave responsibility. How many of us are discharging our duties faithfully when we do our marketing daily? If we buy an article which has been produced by paying wages which are below subsistence level we are buying an article with human life attached to it. Horrible though this may seem, a little dispassionate reasoning will reveal the ghastly truth. When an article is produced by machine, that machine wears out as it works,

and in time, it becomes unusable. Hence the wear and tear of the machine valued at the cost of the machine plus repairs and upkeep, has to be charged and spread over the number of articles produced by the machine. Man is a machine. If a potter makes pots, the price of the pots should bear all costs including the maintenance charges of the potter and his folks. Maintenance is not merely what keeps him alive but should include sufficient to keep him in a fit condition. If not, the cheap pots will include part of his wearing self. Higher price, when necessitated by the payment of adequate wages, is a thing to be aimed at and no buyer should grudge paying it. Hence, those of us, who apply human standards of value, have to inquire into all aspects of manufacture. It is an arduous task and it becomes almost impossible for ordinary persons to undertake it when the articles come from far off countries. Therefore it is that we have to restrict our purchases to articles made within our cognizance. This is the moral basis of "Swadeshi".

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6. VALUES

The standard of value applied and the method of valuation used impress their characteristic trait on their users. The spirit of the most predominant value that prevails amongst a people will colour a whole civilization for centuries. Hence the great importance of choosing our standard consciously and deliberately.

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Unfortunately for the present age, the parties that are playing the star roles on the world are weilding mainly, if not solely, monetary standards which are fleeting in their effect and influence. Everywhere, we hear talk of "High Standards of living", "Raising the national income", "Increasing productive power and efficiency", "Making it pay in the modern world of competition" and a score of such arresting slogans. The prevailing school of economic thought is built on the quicksands of Profit, Price, Purchasing Power and Foreign Trade. There is no thought lost on the deeper things of

life that mark out man from the other orders. If anything, there is a dangerous tendency to treat with contempt any mention of human or spiritual values. Hence the need for caution.

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The absurdity of the above valuations is on a par with that of a goldsmith who walks into a rose garden and begins examining the flowers with a touchstone, the only method of appraisal known to him.

All these ludicrous situations originate from applying the criteria of one economy to another. For example, the race-horse dealer who belongs to the parasitic economy, misapplies the only standard he is familiar with to one who must be judged by canons that prevail in the Economy of Service.

As presented above, these appear too ridiculous to be true. Yet, in actual life, such valuations are being insisted on, not by ignorant tradespeople, but by great scholars issuing forth from the renowned universities of the world. The universities are used as hotbeds for raising theorists who will rationalize and support the modern industrialist belonging to the first three Economies of Parasitism, of Predation and of Enterprise.

Every solution of a problem will be tested by them on the universal touchstone of "Will it pay?". If a mother makes *halva* at her house for her children with the purest of ghee, Prof. Dr. Wiseacre will ask the mother impressively, "If you do not adulterate the ghee with some vegetable fat, how can you compete in world markets?". He will advise the mother to compute her cost of material, adding to it a certain amount indicating the cost of the time the mother spends in the preparation of the sweet. This addition, he will insist, is in the interests of scientific accuracy. Then, he will want her to compare her cost so arrived at with the 'market price' per seer. The simple mother will reply, "What are world markets? Where are they held? I am only making this for my children to eat. They must have the cleanest and purest of things. I am not interested in the market price or in the scientifically computed cost per seer. How can I charge up my time? Is not my whole life dedicated to the welfare of my family?". Dr. Wiseacre will be astounded at the colossal ignorance of the rudiments of

economic science displayed by this "primitive, uncultured woman". The principles of the Economy of Service pervade the home, and the mother being imbued with it, judges her own action accordingly; while the professor is misapplying the methods prevalent in the Economy of Predation to one on service basis. He has been familiarized in such methods, under laboratory conditions of isolating all disturbing factors, to think in terms of one particular principle only, regardless of the environment. However excellent such processes may be as mental gymnastics, they ill qualify him to judge in the outside world where such simplified and artificial conditions do not exist.

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An Economy that is based purely on monetary or material standards of value does not take in a realistic perspective in Time and Space. This shortcoming leads to a blind alley of violence and destruction from which there is no escape. The more advanced in culture a person becomes, the less will he be guided by such short-sighted perishable standards of value. To lead to any degree of permanence, the standard of value itself must be based on something apart from the person valuing, who is after all perishable. Such a basis, detached and independent of personal feelings, controlled by ideals which have their roots in the permanent order of things, are objective, and so, are true and reliable guides. An Economy, based on such values will be a pre-requisite to the achievement of permanence.

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A person garbed in the western style may hold that Khadi at Re. 1 a yard is expensive while mill cloth sells at as. 12 a yard. Here the criterion ignores the setting. The Khadi lover, if a villager, will have grown his own cotton, gathered it, cleaned and spun it in his leisure time and had it woven by his neighbour, the village weaver. He will wash his own clothes, sit on the floor and have such other habits as fit into the village economy as a whole. While the critic may have to pay heavily for tailoring charges of his suit by a competent tailor and for laundering his clothes by a professional dhobie, as he cannot afford to ruin the crease of his suits by sitting on the floor he needs a chair to sit on and that

calls for a table to work on and other chairs to offer to his visitors. His whole method of living becomes complicated and expensive. Taken in this setting who can say that a few annas extra per yard makes the Khadi way of life expensive, even apart from other social considerations ? We cannot isolate one item of cost and compare it with another figure separated from its setting. Often the value of a gem lies more in its setting in the jewel than in itself. We have to consider the whole background of an economy under each type.

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7. WORK AND DRUDGERY.

For a proper understanding of what work is, it is necessary to consider the simplest form of it in the early history of man, shorn of all its manifold and confusing appendages with which it is enshrouded today. The origin of work, in its purest form, can be traced to the early days of man when his ways began to diverge from those of the instinct-driven animals, when he began to make himself tools out of stones. His work was to supply his own needs, using his intelligence, forethought and resourcefulness, in a way similar to how a bird builds itself a nest and goes about in search of food. Man worked to serve and please himself. There was no wage other than the satisfying of his personal wants. This activity was healthy enough to sharpen his faculties and to let him grow as a thinking animal. He brought his finds and kills home to his simple cave dwelling where his women dressed them and got them ready for eating. Thus began housekeeping as the beginning of woman's work. To this day, at least in our country, women's work follows this pure form of supplying one's needs oneself in one's own home.

When work is analysed, it is found that it is a compound of many parts, each contributing its share towards the achievement of the final goal. In the main it consists of routine and rest, progress and pleasure. We cannot isolate any one of those from the others and constitute it into a living unit capable of existence by itself; we

cannot give the routine part of it to one man and the resting part to another; neither can a third party appropriate all the pleasure to himself.

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Thus is work broken up into the component parts, into routine and play, and some people are relegated for all time to do the hard routine, and a few appropriate to themselves the play part of it. When work is so divided without the balancing factor, the routine becomes drudgery and the play part becomes indulgence. Both are equally detrimental to human progress and well-being. The slave dies of privations and the lord of over-indulgence. These efforts, which have been made repeatedly through the ages, have adequately demonstrated over and over again their impotency to lead man to his maturity. In our own generation, this attempt to secure the pleasures apart from the discipline has let loose on humanity the wolves of war, pestilence, famine and death. Are we not to cry "halt" and take note ?

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8. WHY DECENTRALIZED INDUSTRIES?

We have to bear in mind two main principles in Economics. These are, concentration of wealth and distribution of wealth. Centralized industries generally act like centrifugal machines. Centralized industries have the function of concentrating wealth in a few hands. Concentration may be either of wealth or of power. The decentralized industries have the natural tendency of distributing wealth. Therefore, if we do not want in our society, concentration of wealth, then we must take out the centralized industries. What we want is distribution of wealth, especially in a poor country like India. If that is so, we must decentralize the industries by means of which you can distribute wealth.

There is another way of doing it. Russia has done it. They say that they will produce wealth in a concentrated form and then distribute it through Government. The danger there lies in the concentration of power, and not in the concentration of wealth

as in our country. When you get wealth, the people who have to redistribute it have the power in their hands. Therefore, whether it is concentration of power or concentration of wealth, both are evils. In Russia there is concentration of power, as against concentration of wealth in America and England. India is a poor country where we have got to produce wealth, and in the process of production of wealth we have to distribute it. So, where we want to produce consumption goods, I would suggest that we put centralised method of production out of court completely.

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9. CENTRALIZATION AND DECENTRALIZATION.

No one of us is likely to question the purpose of an economic order which may be stated for clarity's sake as follows:–

1. It should create wealth as efficiently as possible.
2. It should distribute wealth widely and evenly.
3. It should supply the needs of the people before comforts and luxuries are catered for.
4. It should be a means for eliciting all the faculties of the worker and developing his personality.
5. It should be conducive to peace and harmony of society.

CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO CENTRALIZATION:

Centralization has been the result of five main causes:–

1. Where there is to be found accumulated capital with a few persons who seek to keep a close and watchful eye over their investment, they prefer centralized methods. We find a good example of this in Great Britain. When she got the hoarded wealth of India, she resorted to this form of production in the eighteenth century.
2. When there is a good deal of pressing work and there is a scarcity of labour, perforce, man grows extra hands in the form of tools or mechanism. A good example of this is the growth of industrialization in U. S. A. America's vast distances, virgin forests and mighty rivers obstructed

man's progress through the continent. People who could be harnessed to this work were few; hence the great conquest of natural forces.

3. Wherever standardized articles are needed, centralization is essential to multiply a particular kind of article on a mass scale. Such need may arise out of two causes : (a) Functionally, where the article by its very nature calls for standard parts, *e. g.* motor cars, railway rolling stock etc., and (b) purposive, where it is necessary because large numbers need identically similar articles, as in the case of military equipment; examples of this may be seen in the militaristic nations of to-day, Italy, Germany and Japan.

4. Centralization in production may again be resorted to where labour is plentiful and it has to be manoeuvered to a plan of work, as in the case of Soviet Russia where regimentation of labour was resorted to bring about quick results.

5. Again it may be necessary when raw materials, manufactures, and markets are wide apart. It is only by unified control that these can be brought together so as to enable the machines to produce steadily and at an economic speed. Japan, Germany and England furnish good examples of these.

EVILS OF CENTRALIZATION :

We have mentioned only five causes, but these are not inseparable. In some countries more than one factor may bring about centralized production. These situations considered above are to a great extent solved by resorting to centralized production, but the evils attached to such a method are not avoided. These evils again may be seen to correspond to the five causes.

1. Centralization which is the result of accumulation of capital, also leads to concentration of wealth which is the hot-bed of class cleavages.

2. When scarcity of labour drives men to methods of centralized production, naturally the labour force being few, purchasing power distributed in the process of production is also small. Therefore this inevitably leads to shortage in purchasing power and ultimately decreases the effectiveness of the demand

and thus causes relative over-production, such as the one we witness in the world to-day.

3. Where need for standardization brings about centralization of production, there can be no variegation in the product. It also checks progress. By facilitating large scale equipment, it encourages warfare.
4. Regimentation of labour leads to a greater concentration of power which is even more dangerous than concentration of wealth. The greater the numbers held by central control the greater can the power be.
5. Co-ordination of supplies of raw materials, production and finding markets for finished goods results in imperialism and warfare.

DECENTRALIZATION:

Let us now turn towards decentralization and consider under which circumstances it can be used with advantage. Here again we shall look at the problem from the corresponding five points :–

1. Where there is a scarcity of capital, it is not possible nor is it necessary to have centralization. The only possibility is decentralization. An attempt is being made to meet this by the promotion of Limited Liability Companies to gather in scattered bits of capital but this does not solve the problem of distribution of wealth. It presents other difficulties.
2. Where there is a plethora of labour, or in other words, unemployment or under-employment, we shall be increasing the malady by centralizing the production.
3. Diversity and variegation is the very essence of decentralization. Where this is needed no machine can compete with hand-work, more especially where the hand-work has to be the expression of personality.
4. If democracy is to be attained, decentralization lays the required foundation. As centralization kills all initiative in the masses, they succumb readily to central dictatorship. Centralization is the grave of democracy.

5. Where raw materials and markets are in the proximity of the producing centres, decentralization methods will serve well.

ADVANTAGES :

1. Decentralization makes for more even distribution of wealth and makes people tolerant.
2. The process of production includes distribution of wealth also, as a large part of the cost goes to pay for the labour. Better distribution of purchasing power leads to effective demand and production is directed into a supply of needs, as the supply here will follow demand.
3. As each producer becomes an entrepreneur, he gets plenty of scope to exercise his initiative. With the responsibility of the business on his shoulders, business-like methods and habits will be formed. When every individual develops himself, the average intelligence of the nation will increase.
4. The market being close to the centre of production, there is not much difficulty in selling the goods nor have we to create an artificial market by forced salesmanship.
5. Without centralization of either wealth or power there can be no disturbance of peace on a large nation wide scale.

A glance at the above analysis should leave no doubt as to what will suit conditions in our own country. Of course as regards key industries and public utilities there is no alternative to centralization, but this can be done either co-operatively or by socialising such industries.

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10. NON-VIOLENT MACHINERY.

There is nothing good or evil in inanimate things. These attributes come into existence by man's reactions towards them. A thing is good or evil according as we put it to beneficial or harmful use. Whether a contrivance is violent or non-violent depends on the purpose for which it is used. A knife used to stab a person is a violent instrument, while when used to cut a fruit it

is non-violent. Machines can be masters as well as servants. When used to exploit other people's labour it is the former; and when it increases the efficiency of the producer himself, it is the latter. Ordinarily, we do object to poisons being taken; but in certain cases poisons are administered as medicine. In the same way under certain restrictions and with strict control, machines are required to aid man to function better. Even the charkha is a machine, but it does not exploit other's labour as the spinning mills do. There can be exploitation even without the use of machinery. In Beedi making, no machines are used; yet, it is an industry in which exploitation figures largely. Machine or no machine is not the fundamental question. The problem is one of finding the best way of not only supplying the material wants but also bringing employment to the people. Machinery, which only saves labour, is a curse in an unemployed and under-employed India, whatever it may be in other countries. Machinery can only be used to make such things as hands cannot make and where it will not displace workers gainfully employed.

Violence has used machinery to exploit others, to keep people in subjection and slavery, to destroy and murder, but non-violence can use it to help humanity to progress. We are familiar with the uses to which Western economic organization based on violence has put explosives—large scale murder and destruction of property. Explosives can be harnessed for constructive work too. Non-violent uses of it will be to blast rocks, to make tunnels, to sink wells, to work mines and quarries and even for amusements in the form of fire works. Hence we cannot condemn explosives as a general proposition. Machinery in modern fighting forces is used for destruction. We can yoke the same power to non-violence and utilize it in the constructive sphere.

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Therefore, when we attempt to plan production in our country to satisfy our needs, we have to be careful to choose the most scientific method and the most progressive ways. We must remember that production of a multiplicity of goods is not synonymous with progress, nor is destruction a sign of science. Attainment of quick results is not conducive to the production of culture. Nature

works in mysterious ways and demands its own time. No man in a hurry can be either progressive or scientific. We need patience and we need a ballast to our lives. This we can find only through satisfying our needs by village industries and decentralized production.

Large scale industries may be used as a necessary evil, as has already been referred to above, in the production of tools and machines needed for cottage and village industries and provision of basic raw materials such as sulphuric acid, steel, etc. It can also provide natural monopolies such as communications, means of transport, public utilities like water and power. Anything more than this will spell ruin and destruction to humanity. It calls for great care and forethought to be able to judge. However, we cannot resort to centralized methods of production in the satisfaction of our daily needs. Wherever there is a doubt it is safer to fall back on the decentralized methods of production. Hence, we hold that the proper application of science and the way to real progress lies in resorting to village and cottage industries to satisfy our daily needs.

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11. WHAT ARE VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ?

Though in a general way people have an idea of the type of industries we include under the category of Village, Cottage and Home Industries, yet at the present time, as the Governments are introducing these terms into their administrative directions etc., it would be well to have a clear conception of the features by which we may identify and classify them uniformly. With this end in view this note is submitted.

Industries which answer all or most of the following conditions may be considered Village Industries :–

1. Those that manufacture indispensable articles needed in villages and for villagers.
2. Using processes within the easy reach of villagers.
3. With the help of tools and implements falling within the financial capacity of the villagers carrying on the industry.

4. Utilizing local raw materials.
5. With the aid of human or animal power.
6. Meeting the demand of local or nearby markets.
7. Not causing displacement of labour or unemployment among wage-earners.

Some of these industries may need the co-operation of many workers, which may be secured by sharing profits or by payment of daily wages. The number of wage earners in a unit may differ from industry to industry.

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12. CO-OPERATION

Man strives to meet his daily needs by his economic effort. He is a member of a social group. Therefore, he has to see that his individual effort does not run counter to the interests of the whole group. In group life certain things conform to a short-range treatment and some others call for a long-range view. A forest cannot be allowed to be cut down for fuel according to the wishes of individual citizens. The forest utilization plan may well run into fifty years. In such cases the working of long term organizations or institutions is entrusted to a group of persons who can be relied on to look at the affairs from a detached view-point. Co-operative Societies should function in such matters and work in the interests of the whole group. To be so entrusted, these societies should command the confidence of the people. In a sense the State itself should stand in this place and be a principal partner in the business of the people. At present the Government in India cannot be trusted further than you can see. How can it claim to have the affairs of the unborn generations placed in its hands?

Then again, where certain services cannot be obtained by individuals because they are beyond their financial means, such services too, should be obtained by co-operation. It is not possible for individual potters to carry on research in the methods of glazing, nor is it possible for them to maintain high temperature furnaces

for their individual wares. But these can be rendered or obtained co-operatively if the co-operative organization can be trusted not to work with a profit-motive, but in a spirit of service. A Co-operative Society has to exercise its rights but should be known for the punctilious performance of its duties to its constituents. In this manner the production of the masses can be increased both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Proper co-operation will lead to equitable consumption also. Any business transaction that does not lead to the mutual benefit of both the parties to the exchange will result in gain to one party and loss to the other. Such a condition cannot be tolerated where a co-operative commonwealth is contemplated.

True co-operation will bring a cultural development of all constituent parts. Material advancement is not the only aim of co-operation. If we ensure mutual co-operation amongst a group of individuals we shall also have, as a necessary consequence, the furtherance of the moral values holding sway in the group. In this manner co-operation of the right type serves to usher in civilization along with material prosperity which is the only course open to mankind to ensure peace in the world. In such a world alone can Free India form a Co-operative Commonwealth.

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13. CO-OPERATIVE BANKING.

The function of any bank is to lubricate the wheels of commerce and industry and keep them moving smooth with the least friction. In addition to this a Co-operative institution has to bring about active co-operation between the various factors in the whole economic organization.

The Western banks, based on money economy, count their progress by the amount of deposits etc. they have received and the interest and profits made. We cannot do that. We have to appraise the work of a bank in relation to the well-being of the people. It has to perform various functions in the economic activity

of the people and serve their needs, even if it meant a loss financially. We cannot ascertain the part a bank has played by any calculation based on rupees, annas and pies.

Western banking systems have been, like the needle of the Hypodermic syringe, used by the financial exploiters to draw out the life blood of the producers. The last famine of 1943, in which about 3 millions lost their lives in Bengal alone, is largely attributable to such misuse of banking powers vested in the Reserve Bank which enjoys, along with the Imperial Bank, the advantage of being the custodian of public funds. But their work is a tragedy to the people of the land. This is because of the misuse of money.

MONEY AS MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE

Money, when used purely as an instrument of exchange or as a means of storage of purchasing power, functions satisfactorily. The tokens used as money are generally imperishable, as compared with commodities, and hence the money holder is at an advantage as he has the bargaining power. A plantain seller has to dispose of her goods before they get spoilt, but the money holder suffers from no such disadvantage. He can hold on to his money for any length of time. Therefore, in this inequality there arises a situation which may be used by the money holder to exploit the commodity holder. Banks as a rule are holders of money. How they use their advantageous position will determine the part they play in commerce and industry. Where a bank uses its power for strengthening its own position as an institution, and if the position of its customers deteriorates as a consequence, such a bank cannot be said to fulfil its purpose in the economic organization. This is as regards money as medium of exchange.

MONEY AS STORAGE OF PURCHASING POWER

Again, as regards its comparative imperishability, the right use of this quality is to afford storage of purchasing power to the people. A farmer cultivates his fields and disposes of his produce after harvest. He realises a certain amount in money. This money has to last him till the next harvest. That is, he should be able to exchange it for other commodities of like value over a period of twelve months. If in this period the purchasing power is altered,

the position of the farmer also fluctuates in the same way. Therefore, an unalterable storage of purchasing power is a prime necessity in an agricultural country like ours. In this function, such banks as yours can help by restricting the spread of money economy, thus limiting the chances of fluctuation and speculation and by rendering reasonable banking services based on the security of commodities as will prevent the farmer having to dispose of his whole stock at a time.

CO-OPERATION

This brings us to the second function of this Bank, namely, that of co-operation. Co-operation implies the elimination of competition and working in a kind of partnership resulting in advantages to all. Its basic requirement is an identity of interest of all parties to the enterprise. There can be no exploitation in co-operation. Therefore, there can be no co-operation with an exploiter at one end and his victim at the other end. Foreigners come to sell their goods to us. That is their only interest in us. It is for that they hold us in political bondage. If co-operative societies help handloom weavers to obtain American yarn they are linking up incompatibles, and, therefore, are not functioning in the true spirit of co-operation. Their legitimate sphere would be to bring local village spinners and weavers into a living touch with one another. They have to bring about co-operation all along the line—raw material produced with the artisan and then with the consumer. The co-operative societies should be the link binding all parties together, like a silver wire that holds the pearls together.

A co-operative bank can protect the unsophisticated villagers from being duped by minions. Such institutions can collect the produce, store them, pay on behalf of their constituents dues, taxes, revenue etc., sell the goods at proper market rates right through the year, without dumping the whole stock at a time on the market and thus causing extreme fluctuations in the price of commodities. They can function like the water-tight compartments of an ocean liner and be the shock absorber in the economic organization.

The test of the proper functioning of co-operative institutions can be seen, not in their financial balance sheets, but in

the bazars around. If these shops are stocked with mill-produced goods or foreign imported articles it signifies that there has been no co-operative effort to bring the various factors of production to supply all our needs. If the co-operative institutions function properly they will promote self-sufficiency in all our primary needs, such as food, clothing and shelter. When this happens there will be nothing to attract the cupidity of the foreign manufacturer. Hence there will be no international jealousies leading to global wars. Thus the development of co-operative institutions on right lines can lead to national independence and through that to international peace.

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14. NATIONALIZATION

Since some little power has passed into the hands of popular ministries there has been a great deal of talk of 'nationalizing' various industries and services. The discussions that have taken place reveal the fact that many are not clear in their minds as to the objective of nationalization. Here it is proposed to set out a few principles that should govern "nationalization".

"Nationalization" presupposes that real power rests with the people, i. e., with the masses. There should be in the first place, a wide foundation of experience in the management of our affairs. This has to be obtained by the villagers looking after their common needs through well organized panchayats. From such experienced men the districts will draw their administrators and these will also supply the requirements of the province in regard to public men and legislators. Such well-based and properly conducted provincial administration will be able to keep under control the Central Government and make it function in the interests of the villagers.

When the Government of the land is in the hands of such tried patriots, who will be trusted to hold the interests of the millions as their first care, then alone can we claim to have a National Government and "Nationalization" will then ensure that the interests of the masses will be taken care of.

In the absence of such a village-based and controlled Central Government, "Nationalization" may lead to greater exploitation of the "have nots" by the "haves".

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15. TRANSPORT

Local transport is one of the occupations that should be open to the masses. Replacing tongas and jutkas by buses is bad economy. Tonga building is a flourishing industry in Lahore, Peshawar and many such cities. Every bit of the money spent on these circulates in the country bringing food and clothing to thousands of homes. Similarly, maintenance of horses also helps to bring employment of thousands of persons including women and children. The running of buses, on the other hand, exports employment abroad. Lakhs of rupees are spent on the vehicles, the fuel and accessories, and only a few drivers and cleaners find occupation. Petrol, being a commodity in demand internationally, it forms the main bone of contention between nations and forms the focal point of global wars. Hence, we would do well to sit and take note before we plunge headlong into mechanised means of transport.

Even in this short time a great many transport services have developed into monopolies. This is a danger we have to be constantly on the watch for; otherwise our remedy will be worse than the disease.

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16. MAN OR BEAST

The so-called "labour saving devices" in lands where man-power is scarce, develop into "unemployment creators" in countries where there is a surfeit of labour. With the advent of "labour saving devices" the artisans are thrown on the land in the first instance. Then the pressure becomes so great that the man is obliged to compete with beasts of burden for the "husks that the swine do eat".

This is the position of the rickshaw coolies. They are competing with tonga horses. A tonga needs a horse and a driver to guide it. Now with the rickshaw the horse is eliminated and the coolie does both the work of the horse and that of the driver, at a lower charge. Thus falls man from the human state to that of a beast of burden. Man is not physically built like a horse. This change overworks his heart and he finds an early grave along with his morsel of bread.

Any society which allows of such degradation is guilty of inhumanity. People have organized societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, but is there no one to heed the cry of those who are driven by poverty and dire necessity to envy cattle feed?

At least at one place, with the dawn of freedom, society is waking up to its duties.

At Medan, Sumatra, the Chinese community has purchased and destroyed the ninety rickshaws that were plying in the town. The coolies were given 100 guilders each and were either repatriated to China or were found other jobs.

Will our rickshaw ridden cities, like Madras and Nagpur, take a leaf out of these and demonstrate that their social consciousness is awakening? Madras is planning to license this nefarious traffic instead of banning it. Will the advent of Swaraj mean anything to the section of humanity reduced to this plight?

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17. RAILWAY FREIGHTS

The Railway Priority Rules have been used to kill Village Industries. The interpretation of Priority Rules will be amusing were not the results so tragic. For months on end we have not been able to send out equipment for village industries such as paddy husking, flour grinding, oil pressing, bee keeping, paper making etc. because of the ludicrous ideas railway servants have. As our implements are made of wood they refuse to classify them as "Machinery

and its parts or tools". According to them machines etc. are always of steel or iron. So we cannot be placed under Class IV "Maintenance [illegible] Industrial Production". Hence the Ghani is classified as "Civilian" furniture!, which is class VI, and even the ghani models, about 1' in height, are so classified. Stone chakkis are classified as personal luggage!

It is interesting to note that cigarettes, liquors, empty bottles etc. get a priority over us as they are placed under Class V.

The clause provides for the transport of paper from "Mills". The Railways refuse to book hand-made paper because we do not call ourselves a "Mill". The Chief Traffic Manager writes that "paper cuttings is considered as raw material, only when consigned to paper Mills", and that as we are not a "Mill", it cannot be booked for us as "raw materials". Can stupidity go further? Or is it a wanton attempt to destroy artisans, because these are not the whims of an ignorant "goods clerk" but the obduracy of highly placed officials at Headquarters?

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18. SPONGING ON THE VOICELESS MILLIONS

Now that popular governments are again assuming responsibility it has become necessary to formulate the policy that should govern their actions. The order of the day has been to make the comfortable people of the city still more comfortable. Government at present is city-centred.

Everywhere in New Delhi, you find the boards, "No bullock carts allowed". Who paid for these roads on which bullock carts are not allowed? These are built, not out of moneys contributed by the motorists, but out of taxes that the poor people pay, the very people who are not allowed to use these roads.

Are such expensively built roads necessary? The motorist needs them to save his tyre and petrol bill, as well as to reduce the wear and tear on the car. They are essential to keep down the dust that the motorist raises. Such even-surfaced roads

enable the motorists to speed along comfortably. Hence they are made necessary for the motorist. Therefore the motorists should be called upon to foot the bill for such roads.

Do animal-driven carts require such roads ? No. The animals slip and fall; besides, they are hard on the hoofs of unshod bullocks as most cart animals are. Therefore, no contribution from non-motorists is called for. Even should such roads be built solely out of funds contributed by the motorists, the general public is entitled to the free use of them.

Hence it follows that all roads needed by motorists must be paid for by the class that needs them. They should not be allowed to use roads other than their own. Charging these special benefits to general revenues is in effect shifting the incidence of taxation from the motorists, who are of the wealthiest section of the public, to the masses, who are financially much weaker. If this policy is given effect to, every motorist will be a self-respecting person. But not so now, when crores are being spent on roads for the motorists' benefit, neglecting the health and education of those who really bear the cost of this expensive luxury, at least in our country.

Such is the case in most activities of the Government. Even the so-called scientific bodies, like the Imperial Council of Agriculture, are but adjuncts to commercial concerns. They spend the bulk of their money, energy and talents in researching on cotton, sugar cane, etc. for the mills and on encouraging the growth of tobacco etc. for the Imperial Tobacco Company. Apart from these, even the Agriculture Colleges train men for such jobs as can be given by mills etc. and not to enable young men to cultivate their own lands as independent farmers. It may even be said that these Colleges wean men away from village life. Again all this is done out of revenues collected from the masses. If the mill owners etc. were honest, the expenses of the whole of this Department should be borne out of contributions made by Textile mills, Sugar mills, Imperial Tobacco Co. etc. They prefer to sponge on the poor instead.

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is also directing its activities similarly in investigating problems, the

solution of which will be helpful to industrial and commercial magnates. They are now taking out patents on their findings on the reduction of Nitro-compounds for cotton colours etc. which benefit the textile mills.

We may understand a small percentage of the work of these bodies overflowing into such activities, while the core of their programme is mainly concerned with researches that will put life into the various industries on which millions depend for their livelihood. The irony of it is they do not even by mistake look at the problems of village industries. The scientists on the staff of these bodies have been told in season and out of season that these simple industries have been out-moded, and that is enough for these men to leave them alone.

A popular ministry will have to scrap these departments or turn them over to the mills or alternately insist that they should launch on problems referred and sanctioned by a Village Industries Ministry or Department.

We find rich Municipalities using their great influence with the Government to obtain grants for their works. Wherefrom does the Government get the money to make grants? Not from Great Britain, but from the masses, out of funds which should have been spent on their needs.

Public expenditures will have to be conscientiously scrutinized to see that no pie coming from the poor is spent by government in such a way as to exclusively serve the interests of the rich and that every item of expenditure that benefits the rich comes out of adequate contributions made by that class. If this policy is strictly followed it will soon be apparent to what extent the better-off classes have been sponging on the voiceless millions, as the former will find that they can no longer live as comfortably as they have done so far. If the methods of the present Government of India are continued by the popular ministries, even if the Britishers quit India to a man, yet poverty will inevitably increase. One class cannot ride on the shoulders of another class in a free country.

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19. CONTROLS

Though the war has been inactive for nearly two years, yet war conditions still prevail in the control in regard to articles of prime necessities. No doubt the scarcity in commodities has called for regulations of some kind, to ensure a certain measure of social justice. Rationing is still with us. Black-marketing is running rampant. Profiteering seems to be flourishing and the Government is busy with controls. To an onlooker there seems to be something "wrong in the state of Denmark". What that is, many people are not able to tell.

The mechanism of price has its main spring in the law of supply and demand. Therefore, any control of commodities and their prices must take the form of regulating the supply and demand. Rationing attempts to regulate the demand but there is a complete absence of any attempt to regulate supply. The present method adopted by the Government to control the prices, is like setting the clock going by constantly turning the minute-hand. What we want is to set the mechanism in order, and the clock ought to work on its own. This artificial regulation of prices has been largely responsible for black-marketing. The prices have to be regulated automatically, not by a fiat of the Government. The Government has been playing King Canute trying to stop the rising tide of black markets and profiteering; but the method adopted has been a total failure. In fact great many of the dealers in commodities desire to have the controls on a permanent basis because it provides the opportunity for black-marketing. Corruption in high places has also been interested in perpetuating controls. It is high time that these matters are set right by the popular ministries now functioning.

If we wish to avoid black-marketing, and control supply and demand in the natural way, rationing will take care of the demand, but the supply side has to be regulated in the normal way, not by merely setting up the prices artificially, but by controlling the supply. The Government can do this by stocking a fair amount of articles that are sought to be controlled and holding

them in reserve, to be sold at fixed regulated prices, in case the stockists are in the market, attempting to sell their articles at a higher price. Of course, the Government will not enter into the market as a seller, until the merchants themselves, by their actions, invite the Government to take drastic steps. The Government stocks will be held in godowns merely as a stand by, watching to see that the merchants do not advance the price unduly. The moment the market prices tend to go up, the Government godown will be opened and the stock dumped on the market to bring down the prices. The Government holdings need not be more than 10 to 15 per cent of the stock required to be able to effectively affect the market.

This is not a novel measure. It has been tried out successfully in the working of the Bihar Central Relief Committee under private agencies, without the aid of the law or other government powers, basing our appeal purely on persuasion. Again in finance, this is the method adopted by the Central Banks to regulate interest rates, which are but market prices for money. For some unknown reason the Government has not followed this well-tried path, but have taken to the King Canute method of fixing prices arbitrarily and by so doing, driving the commodities underground. It is not too late, even now, for the Governments to change over and gradually decontrol the commodities as the market assumes normal conditions. We trust our governments will take immediate steps to relieve the distress the people are suffering from, and because of, the present methods of control.

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Government controls are the order of the day, but how many of these controllers understand the principle underlying controls? Controls are being used indiscriminately and their very purpose is being frustrated.

Where return on capital and profits is the objective of a business, as in centralized industries, price control checks accumulation of wealth and profiteering. On the other hand, in decentralized industries, where the return the artisan gets is a wage, such price control

will act as an obstacle on distribution of wealth. The latter is harmful in a poor country like ours.

Where certain articles are produced both by the centralized methods and by the decentralized, as in the case of cloth or oil, price controls may be applied to mill products but not to hand-made goods, if we follow the fundamental principles of public finance and abstain from restricting the much-desired distribution of wealth.

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20. AHIMSAK PLANNING

Of late years one has been hearing and reading of planning in every sphere of life, more especially in the economic world. People have come to realise that "free trade" and laissez-faire are highways to world wars. Untrammelled competition in a world of men of varied calibre leads to the oppression of the weak by the strong, the suppression of right by the aggressive, the elimination of moral values by the unscrupulous and the exploitation of science and knowledge to wrong ends. To set these abnormalities right, resort has been had to planning, hoping thereby to restore order in this chaotic world.

Do we escape cruelty and violence under a planned economy? Turn towards Russia. In the history of the world, has there been a parallel to the violence generated internally by the planned economy followed by Russia? What is the sacrifice in human lives with which the set goals of economic production have been attained? What has been the part played by Siberia in getting rid of unwanted elements of society? What have the Kulaks to say in regard to all this? How were the stupendous public works—the great canals, the huge dams, the marvellous electricity generating stations etc. —brought into existence? Capital goods were heaped up at the cost of current consumption. They had set their hearts on the end, and the means were adopted regardless of consequences. The result was violence at every turn.

Similarly also the planned economies of Germany and Italy were launched by the use of unprecedented internal violence,

curtailing of personal rights, civil liberty, freedom of thought and action. Ultimately the world was plunged into the barbaric World War II. Are we prepared to take our lessons from this or are we going to follow suit ?

Any planning, where the ends are fixed and the attainment of the goal restricted by time limits, is bound to end in violence in the same way. Material-centred planning, in spite of all altruistic professions, will ultimately land us in bloodshed. Planning of this nature calls for centralized control with, often, the machinery of centralized methods of production. We may succeed in obtaining a glut of material goods but the human aspect of existence will have to be set aside. Violence is the very essence of centralized production. When the raw materials for a production unit located at a point have to be brought in from the four corners of the earth, it is necessary to control transport, safeguard ocean lines, keep open markets for finished articles and educate the consuming public. All this needs violence of various types. Material planning and violence are inseparables.

Then is there no way of planning without tears ? Yes. There is. But that is not centred round material production but round human personality. The economic sphere does not dominate the whole of human existence. It is to be taken as one little part—nay, a minor part of life. It is a means to make the higher life of man possible. Man's life as a whole has to be planned. Such planning of life can be *ahimsic*.

The old Hindu civilization was based on a crude form of such human-centred planning. We have the seeds of it in the Varnashrama Dharma. The ancients recognised that society consisted of various types of individuals,—parasitic, predatory, enterprising, gregarious and altruistic. Planning consisted in allocating specific duties to each and assigning a definite place in society for each. If a person of one type is allowed to perform the functions of another, violence was at once generated. For instance the very nature of the parasitic type is to destroy for its own use whatever it comes up against. Hindu policy put them out of the pale of society. They became 'mlechhas' and untouchables. But this segregation was hardly the way to solve the difficulty.

In modern politics we find the parasitic type working out imperialisms of various kinds. The real solution is not in segregation but in directing their activity in such a way as will keep them away from contact with society. Their parasitic propensities must be turned to account and not merely thrown away. Instead of letting their activities fruition inside society, they should be brought up against insentient things. For instance, Churchill by nature belongs to this group. He entered politics and became a pillar of imperialism. If in his childhood his parasitic nature had been detected, he should have been made a sculptor. Then the destructive tendency would have been channelled against stones instead of against human beings. By chipping off marble and destroying its natural crude form he would have created beauty. His destruction would then have become creation. That is proper planning. Each person's tendencies should be studied in childhood, and his vocation should be selected accordingly. Once a person has been properly placed we need not worry about his economic production. It will take care of itself. A child with predatory nature if made into a hydro-electric engineer, his predatory tendency will obtain for the benefit of society the power of water now running waste. Instead of being so trained, if he is allowed to become a financier or trader he will end by being a black-marketeer or a corrupt government servant.

For such human-centred planning what is essential i a proper system of early education where the natural aptitudes of the child will be studied by carefully trained teachers who will channel the life and work of each child coming under their influence. This throws a great responsibility on the school teachers. They, along with the parents, are the makers of the succeeding generation. Naturally, therefore, they have to be equal to the task set before them.

The Wardha Scheme of Basic Education is a system suited to carry out this function. Starting with the training of women and teachers, the programme of constructive work running through the economic life, by way of the Charkha Sangh and the Gram Udyog Sangh, envisages such a planned economy, where violence will not have to be the corner stone of human existence. We have to

be wary. Any plan that gives priority to production of material goods will sooner or later land us in bloodshed. We have to keep our eyes not on the material side of life but on all that makes human life worth living, the development of human personality. This is where man differs from brute beasts. And the moment we lose sight of the higher values that should guide our actions, we descend to the brute level. We need to be ever vigilant on the watch tower. There are always pitfalls which will divert us easily from our main course. World security cannot be guaranteed in the concerted action of any number of big or small powers. It can only come with the development of the individual. It may be a slow process, but is it not worth striving after?

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Proper planning of life is imperative. To be successful, the objective of the plan recommended must be universal and be in complete alignment with the eternal order of things. It should not be a convenient attempt to foist standardized methods of life on others, with the purpose of disposing of the products of centralized factories, nor should it be such as to kill individual expressions of personality.

Planning to this end implies the formulation of a norm towards which we should work. If the norm is well conceived it will afford free play to all creative faculties of every member of society. Whether the norm is a proper one or not can be judged by the effect any changes in it cause. The natural norm can neither be raised nor lowered within the short span of life. Any such deviation will cause pathological conditions. Nature has designed the wonderful human system we possess. No engineer has yet devised a self-acting and self-regulating pump as the heart. Whether wireless or otherwise, no Marconi has designed a system of communications as perfect as our nervous system. The normal working of this body and mind cannot be altered or designed afresh by ignorant man. Hence, it will be futile for any mortal individual to attempt to change the course of life as he wishes it. All that can be done is to co-operate with nature and arrange to maintain the environment in such a form as will guarantee its working at its best. This stage or norm is set by nature and man's part is to study and understand nature's require-

ments and pay heed to it. If there be any departure from nature's norm, it will lead to social maladjustments.

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The condition and environment for the full growth of the faculties of man that have to be ensured are the primary end of planning. Every individual has to have enough wholesome and balanced food, sufficient clothing to protect the body from changes in weather, adequate housing accommodation, full opportunities for training the mind and body for life, clean surroundings to safeguard health and ample facilities for human intercourse, economic production and exchange. Such then are the planners' objectives. Beyond these all other accomplishments should be left to the initiative of the people themselves. Only then will they have room to afford them chances of exercising their freewill and their scale of values, which would make their lives, not mere existence, but something worthwhile and that will produce a culture as a consequence, which will be lasting and will be a definite contribution to the progress of mankind.

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No planned way of life can deprive the human being of his right to choose his own method of living, as long as the chosen form does not infringe on the rights of his fellow-beings. The planned life is only to ensure that each person gets his minimum human needs at the least. Over and above that, every individual must have as much scope as possible for the individual sense of values to make its presence felt. Any planned life that is too rigid to allow of it and takes away or restricts beyond measure the individual's freedom to act and express his idea of values, will be guilty of regimentation. Regimentation deprives a human being of his individuality and lowers him to the level of a cogwheel in an unalterable machine. Such regimentation of life from the cradle to the grave, whatever be its merits or efficiency, will stand condemned as it fails to answer our first requirement for the progress of a human being,—the right of freedom to express one's personality.

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There have been plans and plans, all aiming at an abundance of material production but lacking root in human nature. Such plans are like a well-arranged vase of cut flowers. They are, no doubt, beautiful and retain for a time their natural scent and appearance; but, as they are severed from the parent plant, death is in them. Therefore, their glory is short-lived.

A planner should rather be like a gardener. He first prepares the soil, sows the seed and waters it and having done his part, he stands aside. The plant, of its own nature, drawing the nutriment supplied by the conditioned soil, grows and brings forth flowers. The well-arranged vase, however much loaded and crowded with flowers, was transient and death was in it, while the plant is permanent, because it draws its sap from nature with its roots and so has life. Some flowers of the plant may fade away, but others will blossom forth to take their place.

Similarly, planning should ensure wholesome conditions for the growth of human beings. What is put forth by them is not the end or aim. The method of starting with a predetermined output and working towards it, is not the way of nature. We may, by such methods, obtain forced results, but that, not being a natural growth, will fade away and may even leave behind an aftermath of decay.

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21. WHAT TYPE OF ECONOMIC ORDER SHALL WE HAVE?

We ought to be prepared to salvage whatever is good in any system and reject what is bad. It is with this approach that we have to look both at Capitalism and Communism. Both have their evils and strong points. Under Capitalism, profit motive is given free play and individuals are allowed to exploit every situation to their gain, even at the cost of injuring society. The advantage of this system is that every individual gets an opportunity to exercise his talents and energy as he likes. In trying to check this, the Communists have gone to the other extreme of doing away altogether with the profit motive. Under their system a small idealistic group plans

the work for the nation, and individuals "are not to reason why, theirs but to do and die." Here the initiative of the individual is suppressed. While the individualistic outlook of Capitalism is bad, the social sense should not be developed into an instict. While we do not need to become animals looking to see whom we may devour, we should not become automatons, or like the bees engage in unthinking activities. We should avoid the two extremes. In the first the individualistic outlook appears in an exaggerated form. In the other, the personality of the individual is utterly crushed. While the first is based on uncontrolled selfish greed, the other is based on class-hatred.

Therefore, we have to devise a system in which men may be guided to some extent by the profit motive and yet will not exploit the weaker members ruthlessly. We need to develop the personality of each individual and every one should be free to exercise his talents. If we can limit the production of commodities to a small unit by decentralizing it, then we shall avoid great many evils that follow in the wake of Capitalism, and yet preserve freedom of thought and action to the individual. In the past, we had decentralized production, but not being conscious of its merit, we had run after large-scale production and are in the slough of despondency at present. Some feel advocating decentralization is setting the clock back. Decentralized production might have been a commonplace a century ago, but that does not prove that it is without its merits even at the present time. A century ago under decentralized production, violence was not organized on a national basis. Then battles were fought with mercenaries. At present, the producer seeks markets and recruits patriots to fight his battles. To-day, by a process of centralized education, children are being taught that they are born in this world to die for their king and country. For this they exist as mere producers. We contend that both under Capitalism and Communism, human values are not taken into account. Every individual has a personality, which, when properly developed, has a contribution to make to society. We have no right to look upon the common run of human beings, as either gun fodder as under Capitalism, or a cog-wheel in a machine as under Communism. We should not reject wholly centralization

nor reject wholly private ownership; we cannot reject wholly profit motives and we cannot advocate complete decentralization. What we want to find is a mean between Capitalism and Communism. Both systems have failed to bring out the best in individuals, and both have led to group violence,—Capitalism to find markets and Communism to keep out the foreigner and to enforce its plan. Hence, we have to have modification of these. While we do not reject the profit motive, we may attempt to curb the capacity of the individual to accumulate profits and wealth. We, human beings, are so built that human progress can only be possible with the advance of each individual. For the advance of each individual, it is necessary to allow certain amount of self-interest. This is fully demonstrated in every day life. When a man works for a fixed salary as, say in a Government post, the contribution he makes to society is generally of a routine nature. The greatest inventions and discoveries have been the results of venturesome spirits attempting to give expression to their inner urge. Decentralization of commodity production ensures the producer the product of his labour. Therefore, if group production has disadvantages, the alternative is decentralized production. While it may be granted that group activity has a contribution to make within a limited community, it is open to serious doubt whether on a national scale it is possible for any length of time. A few idealists may get together and run an Ashram or other philanthropic institutions on the basis of service, but whether such principles can be applied at the present state of varied civilizations on a whole world-basis, may be questioned. For, even Russia finds it necessary to be shut out from the outside world to carry out its communistic experiments. Foreign trade is the state monopoly. Intercourse with foreign nations is highly restricted. Thus the Communistic experiment is carried on almost in a laboratory. Experiments may be carried on under controlled circumstances to find out the laws that govern the movements, but it is too much to think that humanity as a whole will function in like manner under normal conditions without such controlled environment.

Decentralized production under Capitalism directs labour from the supply of primary needs to luxuries—from food to face-powder,—hence it is that we find a world facing starvation and overproduction at the same time.

Centralized production, whether under Capitalism or under Communism, will in the long run, lead to national deterioration, as there is only a limited scope for the exercise of the entrepreneurs' ability. Not a little of the unbusinesslike habits of our people is due to the lack of responsibility both in business and Government. Unless one is allowed to strike out for oneself there can be no healthy growth. We cannot have a nation of stalwarts on centralized methods. Both political and economic freedom need decentralization to germinate. The right place of a machine is as an instrument in the hands of man; but when man is turned into a machine-feeder, the whole organization is up-side down. Man does not exist for the machine.

Under Communism, society is made a fetish of and individuals sink into insignificance. However much of comforts a person may be provided with by society, what shall it profit him if he loses his personality?

Although we have a place for centralized production, it will be only for the purpose of public utilities which would be under either collective or co-operative control. Undertakings such as telephones, telegraphs, roads, postal service, supply of water, exploitation of forests and mines will naturally come within the scope of the state. We cannot allow private exploitation in these undertakings. The objection to social ownership and management for commodity production is that under such conditions progress will be retarded. And if social control can take care of the size and capacity of the units of production, exploitation can be minimised. As long as human nature is what it is, it will be impracticable to abolish exploitation altogether. Exploitation and violence in some form or other will be there. Our eating and breathing is full of violence and exploitation. Our purpose should be to minimise these in keeping with human existence and progress. Under the conditions we propose, there will be a natural limit to the capacity of an individual to produce. And this in its turn, will limit the maldistribution of wealth. So long as individuals differ, one from another, the quantity and the quality of production of the individual will also differ. That is, the income will differ. But the range of difference will be limited. We can

think of differences in income ranging in hundreds or thousands, but we cannot have incomes running into millions without involving an unhampered exploitation of thousands. Finance, trading, marketing etc. can also function in a co-operatively managed organization and therefore, there need be no fear of unlimited private wealth.

Communistic production takes the form of military discipline in the economic sphere, and too much discipline is bad for growth. Communism is also based on class-hatred. Indeed it is an outcome of class-hatred. Even to-day there are distinctly marked differences in the treatment of peasants and workers. If what we hear about the violent methods undertaken to suppress the bourgeois class has an iota of truth in it, no lover of human progress can advocate such methods in any group. Because, if we sow a wind we reap a whirlwind. We cannot afford to lay our foundation stone of a new order on class-hatred.

It is argued that if we are to have any form of Government, violence is essential. As I have already pointed before, a certain amount of violence will always be there in any state control, but what matters is the degree and the spirit behind what appears to be violence. Even a loving father may chastise his child. If there is violence in such chastisement, then there is bound to be such violence also in a government as we conceive it. Under the form of state control which we advocate, the transition may not be sudden and spectacular, but our methods will be slow and will take their own time to permeate through the nation. We have to have patience, if we are aiming at permanence. While disestablishing private property by a stroke of the pen by legislation may be violent, gradual curtailment of private ownership by limiting the productive capacity under state control will not necessarily spell violence. In our own country in the past, as well as in the present, great many functions are under social control. And society decides on the merits and demerits of certain cases. Though there may be abuses in this system, it indicates the possibility of subjecting our people to a group discipline by social control.

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22. THE COW ECONOMY

There is a great deal of talk today about protecting the cow from the slaughter-house. It is good that people are becoming conscious of the great evil that indiscriminate slaughter of cattle has brought on our country. On a purely short-sighted view, the need for milk in a vegetarian country like ours makes us give a premier place to the cow as a feeder of the nation. Apart from this, it also provides the bullock, which is the motive power, with which the farmer cultivates the land. The importance of this aspect of the question has been fully recognized by attributing sanctity to the cow and raising cow protection to the level of a religious obligation. However, because of fanaticism, zeal on the one side has created cussedness on the other, and we often find conflict between different sections of the population about cow slaughter. Therefore, it now becomes necessary to ascertain exactly the place of the cow in India and give it a national recognition and status.

With an artisan the tool that he uses becomes almost an object of worship. In fact, in India we have a definite festival, '*Sastra Pooja*', devoted to this ceremony. Man has thus acknowledged his economic dependence on the means of production. Just as an artisan depends on his tools, the farmer depends on the cow; and if we may extend the economic sphere, we may say that the cow, being the means of producing food, becomes the centre of the economic organization of man, especially in an agricultural country like India.

Apart from this aspect, when we look upon the cow as the producer of the bullock, its importance is enhanced. She now becomes the pivot of our economy. We may call our economic organization, where the cow contributes motive power, transport, food production, etc., a 'cow-centred economy', in the same manner as England and other European countries had, not so long ago, horse-centred economies.

During the last century, England drifted from a horse-centred economy to a coal-centred economy, and from a coal-centred economy, she is fast moving to an oil-centred economy. It is very

important to mark these stages as the fate of the world itself depends on the source from which we obtain our power.

In the cow and the horse-centred economies we have unlimited sources as we could breed as many bullocks and horses as we needed, and there being no restriction on the amount available, it does not arouse anybody's greed or envy; but coal and petrol being limited in their supply and quantity, the use of such sources of power leads to friction amongst nations as the sources of supply dry up. It is now well recognized that these global wars are in no small measure due to different nations seeking to get control over oil-fields. Hence the coal and oil economies lead to conflict amongst nations. Unlike them the cow and horse economies are comparatively peaceful economies. Therefore, in a wider sense, we may say that when we break up a cow-centred economy we are really causing cow-slaughter; in other words, when our actions are inimical to the existence of the cow-centred economy, we are not on the side of the protectors of the cow. For example, when we use coal and oil as our sources of motive power, we are really banishing the cow from our economy. When we are making asphalted roads, which are not in the interest of animal traction, we are also guilty of breaking up the cow-centred organization. This aspect of the question is much more vital to us than the mere slaughter of the four-legged and two-horned animal.

We wonder how many of our friends who abhor cow-slaughter have their hands clean of bovine blood according to this higher interpretation of cow protection. The 'cow', like Khadi, is symbolic of a way of life. 'Cow-slaughter', therefore, would signify making impossible that way of life. We hope that those who stand for cow protection will realize the extensiveness of the cause which they champion and will whole-heartedly support this wider application of the principle.

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23. CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS

Looking at it from the needs of the soil, chemical fertilizers increase the acidity of the soil. Parts of Bengal and Bihar have already suffered from this. To make the fertilizers effective, it is necessary to apply them at a suitable depth and not as a top-dressing. Application of manures at some depth involves deep ploughing and copious irrigation. In our country, where the major portion of the land is subject to the vagaries of the monsoon, it would be a pure gamble to plough deep and manure it with expensive manure, only to find at the end of the season that the rains have failed. Our farmers are not financially well off enough to take the risks of this type of land treatment. As we have already indicated earlier, before artificial fertilizers can be used on any plot of ground a very careful analysis of the soil has to be made and its requirements ascertained. This involves a wide-spread, well trained, expert staff of agricultural chemists who could function as "soil doctors". Before we have such a personnel available at every plot of cultivable land, it will be sheer folly to put artificial fertilizers in the hands of the farmers. It will be like handing in poisonous drugs like opium, morphia etc. into the hands of ignorant patients without any control as to its use. Therefore, even if we wish to introduce fertilizers as medicine, the condition precedent to such a course will be the introduction of agricultural chemists in large numbers. In our country we have not got physicians even for human beings in sufficient numbers. Where are we to find soil physicians in greater numbers?

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24. SCIENCE AND COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

Early this month, the foundation stone of the National Chemical Laboratories was laid at Poona. We trust the scientists will turn their ingenuity to help the small man.

Village industries have been struggling on their own merits against an artificial current set up by the paddles of large-scale industries. In season and out of season propaganda is carried on against the small producers. Real progress and the best utilization

of natural resources are best achieved through village and cottage industries, and large-scale industries are wasteful, though all scientific laboratories are focussed to help them.

We have previously drawn attention to the way the bullock ghanis and dairies are being crushed by financial interests pushing up oil-mills for the production of 'Vanaspati' and how even the Central Government is helping in this programme by sanctioning new mills and shutting their eyes to the evils caused by mills and mill industries.

In spite of scientific evidence to prove the injurious effects of using polished rice on the health of the people, the rationing machinery has been used to distribute only polished rice, regardless of the consequences to the people. Why could not our popular government follow the healthy lead given long ago by Travancore by banning all rice mills?

Since last November the Central Government has been circulating all the Provincial Governments to discourage hand-processed sugar. A scientific approach to this question will indicate that thousands of acres of the best lands can be brought under the cultivation of cereals etc., if we can utilize palm trees growing wild in the jungles and on waste lands. Palm gur and sugar can be obtained from these trees and such a programme will be complementary to the introduction of prohibition, as it will afford employment to thousands of displaced tappers. But then the strongly entrenched sugar mill interests are opposed to such a scheme, as it undermines their industry. The Government seems to have ears only for such.

Nutritional experts tell us that gur is a wholesome food containing minerals, vitamins and sugar. While mill sugar is a simple chemical for producing energy, because it lacks the ingredients necessary for its own assimilation, it draws the needed material from other items of food taken. Hence the Americans term the white sugar a "devitalizing food". Even as between hand processed sugar and mill sugar, the former is more than ten times richer in iron contents. In spite of this in favour of hand-processing of sugar, the Central Government wants the hand-process discouraged! In

many places factory-made white cube-sugar is outside the ration. So the rich can buy without any limit but their purse.

The ever obliging Provincial Governments only need the sign to take drastic measures. The U. P. Government, by its Khandsari Sugar Control Order of November '46, is dealing a death blow to both Khandsari Sugar and Deshi Chini producing industries.

The trend of events seems to be such that we shall end by hanging ourselves with "scientific" ropes. Our Governmental machinery appears to be set to destroy the industries of the common man by the introduction of labour-saving devices which may be otherwise termed "employment reducing instruments". Is it scientific to introduce such in a country teeming with unemployment and under-employment ?

At Lyallpur Agricultural College the Principal is a specialist in *maida* production. They have various kinds of electric machinery to remove all nutritive elements from wheat leaving purely starch behind. There is a revolving electric bakery also. The objective is to produce white bread, slices of which will be uniformly patterned like a honey comb. This can best be attained with the whitest *maida*. Should we not more scientifically and truthfully designate this Principal as "a specialist in food destruction ?" Is there any place for such in a famine-stricken land ?

We in India, seem to be possessed with a mania to destroy all nutrition provided by nature by the use of mills—white rice, white sugar, hydrogenated oils. Is this where science is leading us ?

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25. SCIENCE AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The bullock cart is often associated by the public with Gandhiji's philosophy. They think that we are against human progress and that we want to put back the hands of the clock. In the crude village economy we have got much to improve by Science. Science is a birthright of every human being. Science is an instrument – a double-edged weapon – which you can use either to destroy or

create. Science of to-day is a destroyer. We want to yoke science to human progress. The user can make or mar by the way he handles an instrument. Take for example fire. It can give light when used as a torch and can also be used as a destructive agency. To be able to use any such instrument properly, for creative purposes, we require moral stamina in society.

Science can be compared to a race-horse, bred after generations of experiments. Put a child over the horse and whip it. You know to what result your well-bred horse will be taking the child to. Has humanity grown up from its childhood sufficiently to be able to ride the horse of Science? If we are not morally developed to handle anything bigger than a charkha, why desire for more powerful agencies? Otherwise, the people cannot morally restrain themselves from using their powers for wrong intents.

You can learn all the science of centuries in a short span of three or four years. There is a lag in the moral development, in that much time is required for character to form.

VILLAGES DENIED SCIENCE

To-day, science is being prostituted. Its use has been denied to the masses. The chosen few, who can pay for it, get the benefit of the Scientists' services. Experiments require time and energy. Scientists, after all, are not ascetics and so Science places itself outside the reach of the villagers, as scientists sell their services to the highest bidder. Government help should make science available to all. At present it is in the hands of the people who have their own axe to grind. From the days of the industrial revolution of Europe, science has been utilized for people in large-scale industries; even agricultural researches have been carried out for the textile industry of Manchester and the poor Indian villager has had to pay for all this. When long-staple cotton could not be got from South America, India was made into an agricultural research station. In all these cases, Science has been in the hands of vested interests only.

Scientific young men should go in for village problems. If we solve some problems for the villagers, the moneyed man is there to take full advantage of our efforts. There must never be

any trading in science. Patents and all that are merely recognized ways of exploitation through Science.

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26. SCIENTIFIC USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

A scientific use of resources should mean that we get the fullest benefit out of what we find around us. Man, in his eagerness to use mechanical devices, is often irrational in the utilization of resources. For instance, if paper is to be made out of bamboo by the simple hand process, we do not use bamboos cut fresh from the forest. The bamboos in the forest, when they are first cut, are used in various ways, for roofing, for being made into mats, sieves, baskets and other household articles and then, when they have served their term as such, the broken and used-up bamboo pieces are converted into pulp and paper is made from it.

But the so-called scientific industrialist cannot afford to work on this basis, as his machines are to be kept going all the time; so in his hurry he has to get the tender bamboos from the forest and feed them into his mills to be converted into paper. For this purpose, he has to cultivate forests of bamboos, directing human energy into lines which were totally unnecessary in the former case. Hence, the mill process of making paper as we have shown, is thoroughly unscientific and wasteful in the utilization of natural resources.

Similarly, if we have to utilize as food the nutritious elements found in nature, we may get gur from palm trees that grow wild on uncultivable lands and obtain the whole benefit of the sap, minus the water which it contains, along with sugar in a digestible form, and various minerals and salts.

But man, in his anxiety to use his knowledge, puts up sugar mills, converts good lands, which may be used for cultivation of cereals, into sugar-cane growing lands and then the sugar-cane is converted into sugar, wasting the bulk of the minerals and salts in the molasses, which are thrown out as unfit for human consumption and from which he prepares rum and gin to poison the people and to acquire for himself the money they possess.

Even if sugar be required to be produced by hand, the rab prepared from palm juice can be centrifuged, and having obtained the sugar, the molasses left can now be converted into edible gur, rich in mineral and salts. Molasses produced from the sugar mills, as they are affected by the use of sulphur compounds in the processes, are not fit for human consumption and have to be wasted or converted into intoxicating drinks as stated above.

Here again we see that sugar mills are thoroughly unscientific and wasteful of human resources. They, like the rice mills, are only to satisfy the greed for accumulation of wealth by individuals, at the cost of nutritious food products found in Nature.

UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES

In our quest for ways and means of satisfying our need, we have to take into consideration the resources available to us and make the best use of them possible. It will be unscientific to use coal for fuel where it is not available and where crude oil can be easily obtained. Similarly, where coal is available and where no firewood is available, it would be senseless to bring firewood from distant places for purposes of fuel. In the same manner, where human energy is available cheaply and in abundance, it will be irrational to obtain other motive forces from distant places. In India, where people are suffering from unemployment and lack of occupation, to produce our needs to resort to mill production, which ultimately spreads unemployment, is unthinkable. From this point of view, hand-spinning, however slow it may be, is scientific and in line with human progress, while textile mills are irrational and spell ruin to the people.

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27. OUR EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions can be made to serve many purposes, according to the motives and ideals that urge the organizers. The common use made of it under Capitalism is that of a glorified shop-window. The articles are set out to attract custom. The passers-by see the goods at their best and orders are registered. This use is purely

commercial and exhibitions organized on this basis are utilitarian and often are the means of exploitation, as it lures some persons at a time when they are least prepared to resist any temptation. Many a person goes to an exhibition in the spirit of holiday-making and has frequently fallen into the temptation of ordering goods on the instalment plan which is only a form of pledging one's future income. The Industrial Exhibitions of the West have done a great deal of harm by inducing people, by high pressure salesmanship, to live much above their means. Wily salesmen, alert on their jobs, furnished with plausible arguments and attractively got up "literature", take down the addresses of likely victims who do not there and then succumb to their sweet-tongued introduction to their wares. By their "follow up" programme they net more users of their products. The main purpose of such exhibitions is to bring together the supply and create an artificial demand to absorb it, by fair means or foul. This is the outcome of *laissez-faire* policy and let-the-buyer-beware theory. Such exhibitions are easily organized as we need only appeal to the avarice of businessmen, who will do the job well in their own interests, and at the same time, bring us a revenue in the shape of stall rents etc. Here we are up against the great temptation of taking the easy path.

Exhibitions, when properly organized, can be made into a powerful means of adult education. This, of course, will entail considerable thought and hard work. Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved easily. An exhibition so organized should well pay its way but it cannot be a source of much income. An educational exhibition is expensive but this is a very effective method of bringing knowledge to the unlettered and ignorant. By this means we make villagers discriminating buyers, intelligent producers and understanding citizens. The exhibits should be planned to instruct the visitors in the whole process of production and distribution, from raw material to the consumption of the finished goods. The raw material should be such as is available locally or procurable easily. If there are more than one kind of material that can be used, then the advantages and disadvantages of the different kinds should be demonstrated and explained. The making and working of the instruments of production should be shown. The

suggested improvements can be illustrated. Even foreign products, if they can be successfully copied or adapted to the locally available raw material, can be exhibited as samples. For instance, bamboo and wicker work articles made in Japan can be set out to provide models for our workmen.

Every exhibition should aim at increasing the productivity of the villager. This may be done by showing how elsewhere the same articles are produced better and cheaper by some improved technique. By seeing well-made articles, the buyers will insist on getting their money's worth, which will keep the producer up to the mark as the consumer will know what quality to demand.

By a proper display of facts the visitors can be educated to realize their own duties towards their neighbours.

In all such public attempts care must be taken to keep down expenses. Therefore, articles must not be imported from far unnecessarily.

Thus, if the visitor is a layman, he obtains information as to what is being done and how it is being produced. If he is a producer, he can improve his production by studying other and more efficient methods. If he is a consumer, he knows what to demand for his purchasing power.

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28. THE ECONOMICS OF RURAL TRANSPORT

INTRODUCTION

No attention appears to have been paid to the construction of roads to connect the villages *inter se* and the villages with the market towns, although vast amounts have been spent on the construction and upkeep of the trunk roads to connect the distant cities. The village roads are unsuitable for transport even during the winter and summer. Transport is impracticable during the greater part of the rainy season. The roads are merely portions of land left between the fields. The villagers prefer to take carts through the fields when there is no crop in them. The roads are, therefore,

worse than the cultivated fields. It is easy to roam about the whole world in trains, ships and aeroplanes, but it is difficult to travel even a few miles in the villages.

USUAL MEANS

The usual method of transport from the village to the market town and back and the villages *inter se* is by bullock carts, because it is cheap, and buses cannot ply on katcha roads.

The articles taken to the market are mainly non-perishable. The only perishable articles are plantains and vegetables, but even they are exported by cart without any damage to the goods. For distant traffic, however, the railway is used. Passengers use buses on pucca roads.

People within the locality are benefited by carts, Indians by buses and Europeans by railways, so far as earnings are concerned.

TAXES

There are no tolls or taxes for the use of katcha and pucca roads by the carts. Buses have to pay licence fee and petrol tax to the Provincial Government. There is no tax on transport by railway.

If any katcha bridge is made over a river, taxes have to be paid for transport. At Hinganghat, a katcha bridge is constructed over the Wana river. The transport charges are as follows:—

Cart, 3 annas for going and coming back.

Man, 3 pies for going and coming back.

Cattle, 9 pies for going and coming back.

Even if carts, men or cattle do not go over the bridge but pass through the river, a tax is realised. It is given on contract by the Public Works Department and both the contractor and the Department make some profit in the business.

Such taxation may be stopped and the construction of the bridge taken up as an ordinary Department work. In no case should the tax be realized from those who do not use the bridge.

EARNINGS OF A CART OWNER

If a cart owner carries cotton bales from Arvi to Nagpur, his earnings are as follows:—

One cart carries four bales of cotton and completes the journey to and fro within five days. On the return journey it rarely gets anything for carriage. One cart costs Rs. 25/- and lasts for three years. A bullock pair costs Rs. 50/- and renders service for about six years.

Income—Hire of four bales at Rs. 1-8-0 per bale	Rs. 6 0 0
Expense—Two bullocks at Re. 0-8-0 a day for five days	Rs. 2 8 0
Depreciation for cart Re. 0-2-0 and Depreciation for bullock Re. 0-2-0	Re. 0 4 0
Repairs, oil, etc.	Re. 0 2 0
	Rs. 2 14 0
Earning for five days	Rs. 3 2 0

The monthly income is Rs. 18-12-0. The cart owner carries on this traffic from November to January, i. e., about three months in a year. With the help of agricultural labour, the cultivator near the towns plies carts when he has no work and earns about Re. 0-8-0 a day.

SUGGESTIONS

Control of transport is essential for the development of industries. The Provincial Government can control transport by cart and bus within the province, but it has no power over the railways. For regulating the imports and exports of a country, transport rates act in the same way as customs tariff. This is one of the reasons why there is a great influx of foreign goods and no outlet for indigenous products. This state of affairs can be mitigated to some extent by encouraging road transport.

The articles (cotton, gur, etc.) that are exported to long distances are not perishable. Quick transport is not essential for them. Pucca metalled roads are already in existence for long distance traffic, but they are more suitable for motor transport. Carts follow the side tracks, where there are no stones, as stone spoils the hoofs of the bullocks. These side tracks are full of sand and so the transport by cart becomes more costly and is much delayed. They should be constantly repaired to suit cart transport. The largest

item of expense for the cart owner is cattle fodder. If this can be reduced the cart owner will be able to carry goods to much longer distances. This can be done by reserving adequate land for grazing and raising cattle fodder by the side of the roads or at suitable distances. Research may be made in improving cart wheels which can be made by the village carpenters so as to cause less exertion to the loads. The bullock cart transport can provide employment to a number of cart owners, carpenters, blacksmiths, labourers, wood-cutters, etc.

The efficiency of different methods of transport can be judged properly only when equal opportunities are extended to all of them. Railway trains and motor buses run on ways on which a vast amount of money is spent annually. They are daily being improved upon by research. The fuel is readily available for them. The bullock carts run through hills and valleys on self-made ways on which no money is ever spent. No researches are ever carried on for their improvements. No grazing land is provided for the bullocks which are the motive power of the cart. If the bullock cart is put on an equal footing, by removing the above obstacles, with the railway train and the motor bus, it may compete with them to a much greater extent.

After providing all these facilities, wherever the cart cannot withstand competition from the railway, motor buses run by crude oil or charcoal gas may be encouraged. This will enable the Provincial Governments to control long distance traffic to some extent.

The greatest obstacle in the transport from village to village and the village to the market is the poor condition of village roads. If the construction of katcha village roads is now taken in hand it will provide immediate relief to village labour, which is urgently in need of the same and confer permanent benefit on the villagers. Agriculturists will also be able to supplement their income, and out of this income they may be able to pay up their rent. The collection of land revenue may be made easy. By the side of these katcha roads, trees can be grown for the use of the villagers. Fruit-bearing trees would provide the poor people with a source of free food supply at the time of need. Tanners, carpenters, telis, weavers and other village artisans also require various sorts of wood, bark, etc. Their requirements can also be met from this source. To some extent

they can supply Ayurvedic medicines also. The trees to be planted would have to be carefully selected so that they can supply the requirements of the villagers as best as it would be possible to do so.

The expenditure on roads need not be very great. Pucca metalled roads are unnecessary for the villagers. Rather they would be detrimental to their interest as the motor bus may then start competition with the bullock cart. Creation of hard surface on the roads for the two wheels of the cart and the bullocks to walk without any trouble would be sufficient. Two parallel lines each about one cubit wide, with sufficient space in between, may serve the purpose. Katcha drains to allow the rain water to flow away without damaging the road would be essential.

In these circumstances if the entire activities of the Public Works Department, carried on at present, be stopped for about a year or two, and all the available money and energy spent on the construction of suitable katcha village roads, there may not be any appreciable loss elsewhere, while the gain to the villagers would be considerable and lasting.

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29. SUMMARY OF REPORT OF THE CONGRESS AGRARIAN REFORMS COMMITTEE AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS

PLAN OF THE REPORT

The Committee's Report is divided into eleven chapters.

The first four chapters deal with the main problems of rights in land, the future pattern of agrarian economy and the place of co-operative farming therein, and the question of the machinery of land management. Other chapters deal with problems of agricultural indebtedness, rural finance and marketing, agricultural labour, stabilization of agricultural prices, agricultural improvements, agro-industries, rural welfare and agricultural statistics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Land Reforms : The Committee feels that there cannot be any lasting improvement in agricultural production and efficiency without comprehensive reforms in the country's land system. The

Congress, in its election manifesto and the Report of the Economic Programme Committee, has declared itself in favour of the elimination of all intermediaries between the State and the tiller. The Zamindari Abolition Bills in the various Provinces which are in different stages of implementation are a first step towards that objective. But even after the abolition of the zamindari, there would remain a large element of non-cultivating interests in land. The Committee is strongly of the opinion that in the agrarian economy in India, there is no place for intermediaries, and land must belong to the tiller, subject to conditions mentioned hereafter. The Committee has, therefore, recommended that, in future, sub-letting of land will be prohibited except in the case of widows, minors and other disabled persons. To cover the period of transition, however, the Committee has recommended a set of rights for the actual tillers who are themselves not owners of land. Those who have been cultivating land continuously for a period of six years should, in the opinion of the Committee, automatically get full occupancy rights. In case of others the Committee has recommended that the owner may have the option, up to a certain period, to resume the holdings for personal cultivation, subject to certain well-defined conditions. Only those who put in a minimum amount of physical labour and participate in actual agricultural operations would be deemed to cultivate land personally. The owner will have the option to resume the holding to the extent to which it is necessary to make his self-cultivated holding economic. He can, however, resume more land, up to the maximum prescribed, if thereby he does not reduce the tenant's holding below the economic. The Committee has also recommended that the tenant should have the right to purchase the holding at a reasonable price to be determined by a regional Land Tribunal. The tenant should be assisted by a suitable financial agency in purchasing the holding. The Committee has laid special emphasis on immediate prevention of all evictions and the preparation of a record of rights by local Land Tribunals with which non-official opinion will be associated. All tenants, to whichever class they may belong, must be protected from rack-renting and illegal exactions. There will be provision for determination by the Land Tribunal of reasonable rent as well as for the commutation of rents in kind into cash.

PATTERN OF AGRARIAN ECONOMY

The existing pattern of agrarian economy is so complex and the problems which it has to face are so variegated that no single uniform method of land utilization can meet the requirements of the situation. The Committee has, however, kept before itself some of the main principles which should govern the agrarian policy of the country.

(i) The agrarian economy should provide an opportunity for the development of the farmer's personality.

(ii) There should be no scope for exploitation of one class by another.

(iii) There should be maximum efficiency of production.

(iv) The scheme of reforms should be within the realm of practicability.

Though the Committee has recommended more than one type of farming, it has adhered to the principles laid down above. Thus, though there is a variety in form, there is unity in idea.

SIZE OF HOLDINGS

The basis of differentiation in the types of farming which guided the Committee is mainly the size of holdings. For the purpose of analysis the Committee has evolved three norms of sizes of holdings, - Basic, Economic and Optimum.

ECONOMIC HOLDINGS

The central concept is that of an Economic holding which should be determined according to the agronomic conditions of different regions, on the following principles :

(i) It must afford a reasonable standard of living to the cultivator;

(ii) It must provide full employment to a family of normal size and at least to a pair of bullocks.

BASIC HOLDING

The logic behind such differentiation is that holdings below the economic size demand a different approach and treatment,

say that of rehabilitation. But the number and percentage of such holdings in India is so large that the task of rehabilitation of such a vast sector of the agrarian economy would be beyond the organizational competence of the State. The Committee, therefore, has evolved the concept of a Basic Holding which will be smaller than the economic holding, and to which the rehabilitation treatment may be given. A Basic Holding is a holding smaller than which would be palpably uneconomic from the point of view of efficiency of agricultural operations. Thus, there will be between the Basic and the Economic Holdings a category which, though uneconomic in the sense of being unable to provide a reasonable standard of living to the cultivator, may not be inefficient for purposes of agricultural operations.

OPTIMUM HOLDING

The Committee has also felt that there should be a ceiling to the size of holdings which any one farmer should own and cultivate. In the first place, the supply of land, in relation to the number of people seeking it, is so limited that not to put a ceiling on individual holdings would be irrational and unjust. Secondly, under the present technique of cultivation, the managerial capacity and financial resources of an average cultivator in India, the optimum size of a holding has to be fairly low. The Committee has, therefore, recommended that the optimum size should be three times the size of the economic holding. Certain exceptions, however, have been allowed in cases of joint families and charitable institutions.

It is argued that the imposition of such ceilings to ownership in one sector of economy will create anomalies. The Committee, however, is competent to make recommendations only with regard to the agrarian economy, but has every hope that a similar principle of distributive justice would be applied to other sectors of our economy.

MODES OF FARMING

Family Farms: The Committee has recommended a restricted form of family farming for holdings between the Basic and the Optimum sizes. It is decided to lower the limit of family farming below the Economic size in the hope that the provision of multi-purpose co-operative facilities would reduce to a great extent the inefficiency involved in farming on such units.

Co-operative Joint Farming : There is, however, a limit below which family farming, even with all the co-operative aids implied in better farming, ceases to be economic. The Committee has, therefore, recommended Co-operative Joint Farming for holdings below the basic size.

This, however, does not mean that all the below-Basic Holdings in a village would be lumped into a single giant co-operative in which the cultivator may lose his individuality. A Co-operative Joint Farm can be formed, whenever the requisite number of below-basic holders come together and constitute a holding of the optimum size.

The Committee is convinced that without these co-operative moulds, better farming for family farms and Joint Farming for holdings below the basic, the efficiency of agriculture cannot be substantially increased. It has, therefore, recommended that the State should be empowered to enforce the application of varying degrees of co-operation for different types of farming. Thus, while the family farmer (holder of a farm between the Basic and the Optimum) will have to make use of the multi-purpose co-operative society for marketing, credit, etc., the below-basic holder will have to cultivate his farm jointly with such other holders. The organizational and other difficulties involved in the implementation of the proposal, however, would necessitate its spread over a period of time. A beginning may be made in selected areas and its extension may be entrusted to specially trained persons under the planned direction and control of a Provincial Co-operative Farming Board. The gradualness of the programme, intelligent propaganda, liberal state-aid and its judicious implementation by a specially trained cadre, would to a very great extent reduce the psychological hesitation of the farmer to take to the co-operative patterns recommended by the Committee. The Committee firmly believes that the agrarian traditions of this country are in favour and not against the Committee's recommendations.

Collective Farming : The Committee has recommended the Collective type of farming on a portion of reclaimed lands where landless agricultural labourers would be settled. This will to a certain extent help in satisfying the land hunger of the landless labourers

and give an opportunity to the State to test the economies of mechanized farming. In the initial stages the State will have to provide the necessary resources. The Committee is of the opinion that individual settlements should on no account be allowed on newly reclaimed lands.

With regard to the land above the ceiling to holdings, subject to the rights of the tenants, the same should be used for the purposes of co-operative joint farming whenever such land can be obtained in a big bloc. When such land is available in scattered bits, it may be used for making uneconomic holdings economic.

State Farming : The Committee has also recommended the creation of state farms for the purpose of research and experimentation.

RIGHTS IN LAND

On the question of rights in land, the Committee is of the opinion that these should be shared between the community and the tiller. The idea of proprietorship, in which the owner could use or misuse land as he likes, is incongruous with the economic and social needs of our times. This, however, does not mean that the State should assume all the rights and authority, leaving no scope for initiative on the part of the cultivator and for the development of his personality. The cultivator will have permanent, transferable and heritable right of cultivation, subject to the following conditions :

(i) that he does not sublet his holding;

(ii) that he transfers his holding according to well-defined priorities laid down by the appropriate authority and at a price which is reasonable and not speculative;

(iii) that he conforms to the test of good husbandry and the scheme of crop-planning proposed from time to time by the Land Commission.

The rights vested in the community are to be exercised by the Land Commission through agencies at different levels, the basic one being the Village Panchayat elected on adult franchise and proportional representation. The Panchayat will be in charge of all

the common assets of the village, e. g. the waste land, village sites, tanks, forests etc. It will also be responsible for the collection of land rates from the cultivators.

LAND MANAGEMENT

The Committee strongly believes that the present system of administration pertaining to the various aspects of land use and management is very faulty. Though of late there have been some efforts at co-ordinating the work of departments concerned with the problems of agrarian economy, the integrated outlook which is so necessary for a comprehensive solution of the problem is conspicuous by its absence. Secondly, the approach is still bureaucratic with its characteristic weakness of red-tapism and lack of sympathy. The Committee has, therefore, recommended a single and integrated machinery with regional units composed of different elements—officials, experts and representatives of the agricultural population with all the powers and responsibilities at present vested in various departments dealing with the problems of agrarian economy. The idea is to import a functional, rather than a political, approach in land administration. Maximum effort will have also to be made at decentralizing the functions of this administrative machinery by devolving as much power as possible on the regional units.

At the apex of this machinery will be a Statutory Central Land Commission whose primary duty would be to evolve an all-India scheme of crop-planning and allocate scarce resources according to priorities. There will be Provincial Land Commissions with a wider range of functions and responsibilities. The Provincial Land Commission will be assisted by a number of specialized Boards such as those for Rural Finance, Co-operative Farming, Wages Determination, etc. The Committee has also recommended the creation of a Rural Economic Civil Service for the execution of the Commission's work. There will be similar regional authorities in charge of a group of villages, the basic unit being the Village Panchayat.

AGRICULTURAL INDEBTEDNESS—
RURAL FINANCE AND MARKETING

On the question of agricultural indebtedness, the Committee is of the opinion that for a large sector of the agrarian population the

burden of indebtedness has not diminished in spite of high prices. It has, therefore, recommended compulsory scaling down of the debts on the basis of the paying capacity and the equity of the loans in case of farmers. In case of agricultural labourers, however, the Committee has recommended complete wiping out of all indebtedness. The Committee has wholeheartedly endorsed the schemes for compulsory registration and control of money-lenders.

The important question, however, is the provision of alternative credit at reasonable rates. For this the Committee has suggested that there should be a single agency in charge of all credits. The credit should be as far as possible controlled, functional and in kind, and the fullest use should be made of multi-purpose co-operatives for the purpose.

The main feature of the Committee's recommendation, however, is that lack of credit-worthiness should not come in the way of the cultivator in securing the essential requirements of farming. This has been the biggest impediment in the progress of institutional credit. The percentage of uncredit-worthy cultivators in India is so vast that any scheme of credit which confines itself to the so-called credit-worthy cultivators will only touch the fringe of the problem, leaving the vast number to the mercy of money-lenders. The Committee recognizes that the extension of credit-worthy cultivators would ultimately amount to a scheme of subsidisation. But there seems to be no escape from such commitments. All such finance may be considered as a part of a scheme of rehabilitation.

According to the Committee, regulated market, multi-purpose co-operative societies, and licensed warehouses would be the major planks in the scheme of reforms of marketing and rural finance.

AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

The Committee has laid great stress on the immediate amelioration of the conditions of agricultural labourers. It has found sufficient evidence of agrestic serfdom in many parts of India, especially in Gujerat and Madras. Employment of such labour, in the opinion of the Committee, should immediately be made a cognizable offence. The Committee has also recommended an early implementation of the provision of the Minimum Wages Act for

agricultural labourers through Wage Boards. Provision of housing sites and prevention of ejectment should be given top priority. The main problem of an agricultural labourer is, however, unemployment and under-employment which can be tackled only by a planned development of suitable agro-industries. To stimulate mobility of the labourers it will be necessary to establish Employment Bureaus whose functions would be to explore the opportunities of alternative employment and offer special facilities to labourers for migration.

State legislation alone, however, on all these questions will not produce the desired result. And the effort will have to be backed up by a strong trade union movement. There should be a separate trade union of landless labourers. But in order to be successful they should be in intimate touch with the organization of urban labour.

AGRICULTURAL PRICE

The Committee believes that the assurance of a reasonable income to the agriculturists through stabilization of prices or a scheme of Crop Insurance is necessary for the success of agrarian reforms. It has, therefore, recommended that a technique should be evolved for maintaining parity between prices of agricultural and industrial commodities.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

The Committee has emphasized the need for the proper maintenance of agricultural statistics without which no sound policies of agricultural planning and development can be formulated. The point that needs to be noted is that the task of organizing the statistics should be a joint effort of statisticians and agricultural economists.

RURAL WELFARE

No agrarian reform will be complete unless it embraces the aggregate life of villagers. In a final chapter the Committee has, therefore, given a comprehensive plan for the organization of rural welfare, some of the main ingredients of which are the provision

of basic education with agriculture as the main craft, rural health organization and the development of the Village Panchayat.

AGRARIAN REFORMS COMMISSIONERS

The Committee would request the Indian National Congress to look upon its set of recommendations, not as isolated pieces, but as a single integrated pattern. One can neither appreciate nor implement them in parts. Some of them are, no doubt, of a fundamental character. But fundamental problems can never be tackled by patch-work reforms.

The implementation of the recommendations would require determination, drive and imagination. While the Committee is aware that the implementation of the reforms will naturally be gradual in character, Agrarian Reforms Commissioners with necessary powers should, however, be immediately appointed both at the Central and Provincial levels. There should be Provincial Commissioners charged with the task of quickening up the pace of the agrarian reforms in the Provinces and also a Central Commissioner to co-ordinate the reforms in the Provinces and to bring to the notice of the Central authority the obstacles in the way of such co-ordination and uniform progress.

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III

POLITICS

1. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SATYAGRAHA *

We believe that sovereignty rests within a people. Law is the expressed will of the people. A government is intended to serve the people, and therefore should be subject to the will of the people. In other words the legislature should have the power to turn out the executive. Only under such conditions can the government claim the obedience of the people to laws which are after all constitutional expressions of their own will, provided, always, that the laws in themselves do not run counter to the ideals of the best in the land; otherwise, even the will of the majority may be immoral and then it would be fit and proper to disregard such laws. On the other hand, a legislature which passes Bills initiated by the executive without the power to turn out the executive, can have no pretensions to the obedience of the people, as such laws are only veiled forms of despotic firmans. They are, in effect, ordinances clothed with the appearance of democracy. A government run on such

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laws cannot lay claim to the unquestioning loyalty of the people as it is essentially a despotism. Such a government cannot be truthfully called 'A government by law established'. When such a government talks of enforcing 'Law and Order', it merely means, in simple language that they wish to force the will of the executive on the people, which is of the essence of tyranny.

When we apply these accepted principles of democracy we find the Government of India is an unlawful body and is an usurper of the people's sovereignty and their inalienable rights. We feel that it is the bounden duty of every man who seeks after truth and righteousness to do his utmost to put matters right; and it becomes a matter of religious duty to resist to the end the enforcement of the tyrannical mandates of such a body and openly break 'Laws' which are immoral and oppressive. This is the fundamental concep-tion on which the whole movement is based. The Satyagrahi has no enmity with any person. His attempt is to break a soul-less machine which is driving its monstrous fangs into the heart of the nation. We have nothing against the individuals forming the bureau-cracy personally. The bureaucratic system is the common enemy of both the Britishers and the Indians. It is degrading both. The British public owe it to themselves to see that India is made respon-sible for her own government. Only those, who have the power to change conditions but do not bestir themselves to do so, can be held responsible for the acts of the bureaucracy. I have often seen excuses made for the Viceroy, to absolve him from the blame attaching to measures launched by him on the score that he himself is a victim of a system. This is wrong. Members of the bureaucracy can be excused as they are merely wheels in a machine. But the Viceroy who holds office only for five years is expected to bring an unbiased mind and to rise above the grooves of official routine and be able to take a detached view of affairs. One who does not or is not capable of doing so is a failure, and on his shoulders will rest the blame for any misdirection of policy. No one can escape liability on the ground of being a creature of environment. The best among men create their own circumstances under which they work. The bureaucrats may be victims of circumstances, but not so the Viceroy.

While we are justified in placing the responsibility for actions on the Viceroy, we do not bear any ill-will towards the man. We strive to distinguish, even in the officials, between the machine and the person.

As regards ourselves we are sure we can attain Swaraj only when the nation is purified of evils and is relieved of handicaps. The Satyagrahi should not be self-centred; he seeks the welfare of his neighbours, especially the poor and the helpless. Our programme ought not to harm any one, but should be beneficial to all parties engaged in this struggle. Of course, our avowed object is to break the bureaucratic system.

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2. THE GANGSTER MANOEUVRES*

Taxation in India under the present regime partakes much of the nature of the hold-up-man's profession. The object of the robber is not to hurt the victim. He will be prepared to say "Amen" to all the pious sentiments voiced by the Viceroy in the preambles to all his nine ordinances issued in the last six months. The one purpose is to raise money with the least effort. The more readily the victim hands over his belongings, the less the danger of "Law and Order" being broken by the robber. The only difference between our Government and the cut-throat lies in the fact of the latter's honesty of purpose. The Government under the pretence of serving the people relieves them of over 88% of what they pay by way of taxes, and returns to the villagers only about 12% of it by way of the benefits of Government. Now that the farmers are awake and have discovered the hole in the purse, they are refusing to pay the land revenue. Knowing the British predatory habits, many of the villagers of Gujarat had removed their movable household property from British territory. The Government was nonpulssed as they had nothing on which they could lay hands. The only property the farmers have now is the standing crops,—the fruits of their labour for several months past. These are due to be harvested during the

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current month. To forestall the villagers disposing of the grain before the land revenues fall due in January, the Government has antedated the due dates by three months to 5th October, and have asked the villagers for a guarantee for payment of tax before they proceed to reap the crops. In most cases the villagers are determined to harvest the crops without giving any such guarantee. The Government is busy getting outsiders to buy up the standing crops with the condition that the purchasers should first pay the land revenue and then enjoy what remains. The fields are being auctioned for nominal prices for this purpose.

Not being content with this, they hope to strangle the friends of the masses—the Congress organizations—by declaring them all unlawful. In addition, the Government has cast envious glances at all their belongings. In his latest ordinance His Excellency has excelled his previous despotic moves by authorizing taking possession of immovable property and the confiscation of movable property of such organizations. About 78 organizations in Gujarat, with lakhs of rupees worth of property, have come under this ban and their property is being looted.

This, in a measure, will help the Bombay Government to lessen the large deficits it is facing in its current budget due to the "Activities of the Congress". They are determined to get the money by all means, fair or foul; of course, the blame is on the Congress and on the masses who foolishly refuse to be relieved of their worldly goods.

Let us not imagine that Lord Irwin is inaugurating a new policy by these predatory ordinances. His policy is in complete accord with the traditions of the 150 years of British rule. The only difference is formerly we allowed ourselves to be robbed while we slept to the lullabys of pious sentiments sung by Viceroys and Finance Members, but to-day these very lullabys are the ring of the alarm that wakes us up. Even Gandhiji — a man who never distrusts anybody — now demands proof of a change of heart. Lord Irwin responds with his ninth ordinance.

In passing we may point out that the emergency power of issuing ordinances was granted under the Government of India

Act 1919 as a "safeguard". Will our R. T. C. nominees, who clamour for 'Dominion Status with safeguards', please note how these 'safeguards' are being used to make of no effect the legislative bodies created under the Reforms?

In the "Viceroy's appreciations of the situation in India" that are being sent to London for 'home consumption' from time to time, the statement that the Civil Disobedience movement is languishing is reiterated every time. Yet the Government have found it necessary to promulgate an ordinance which places the Government officers beyond the jurisdiction of the High Court and which would have made the medieval tyrants blush for very shame, to stifle a "languishing movement". Either those "appreciations" are inaccurate or the tactics of the Government are totally unsuited to the situation, and may be taken to be vindictive. Which is it?

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3. INDENTURED EDUCATION*

The schools, which have the moulding of future citizens as their task, receive our children at a very impressionable age. It is, therefore, incumbent upon those who undertake this responsibility to see that the vision of the charges committed to their keeping is not blurred in any way. The children should be encouraged to widen their outlook on life. Anything that hampers their mental expansion should be anathema. If the time spent in school is to be a preparation for the larger life of the man or woman, we have to inculcate all principles that may guide them later, even while they are young. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." The child should be introduced to all truth, and nothing should be kept from it. If we wish to train men to play a leading role in Purna Swaraj, we have to take them in hand while the future citizens are still at school. It is essential that these should be brought into living contact with problems they will one day be called upon to solve.

The surest way of keeping India in political bondage is to stop the boys and girls from thinking on liberty and freedom.

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The British Government has realised this fully and has been putting off the day when India will be fit for Self-Government by tabooing participation of school boys in political matters. Till now they were content with making rules and regulations regarding this. They now find that this precaution was not sufficient to keep down the unbounded patriotism of youth. So the Government of Assam has devised a form of 'indenture' to be solemnly signed and declared by the guardian before a child can be admitted into a Government aided school. The guardian has to 'engage on behalf of the pupil that he will take no part in political activities or demonstrations of any kind.' 'Political' activity is explained to be any participation in hartals, school strikes, attendance at political meetings, picketing and the like. As though this were not enough, the older boys are to sign another contract to abide by the undertaking given by the guardians on their behalf. The minimum punishment for a first 'offence' is a fine of one rupee or withdrawal of privileges of scholarship-holders, etc. The second offence will be met with suspension or rustication, re-admission being subject to corporal punishment.

We wonder if any parents will be anxious to relegate their children to these mental prisons. If ever circumstances demanded a boycott of Government schools, it is made imperative by such regulations. If we direct the wasteful taxes, which were being handed over meekly to the foreign exploiters, into proper channels we shall have more than enough funds for the education of our children.

These Government regulations are calculated to strike terror into the parents and fear into the children. Bertrand Russell says, "If I were about to be executed and were allowed twenty minutes in which to make a farewell address, what should I say? I think I should concentrate upon one issue, namely, the importance of eliminating fear. A great many of the defects, from which adults suffer, are due to preventible mistakes in their education, and the most important of these mistakes is the inculcation of fear."

Let us bid farewell to fear and launch on a bold enterprise of starting our own schools where the science of citizenship should be one of the compulsory subjects from the infant-classes upwards.

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4. POPULATION PROBLEM

The Times of India is doing its readers a gross injustice by writing such leaders as it did on 27th May, 1930. That article seems to be definitely calculated to mislead its readers and to throw a smoke-screen on truth. However unsavoury truth may be, unless we are prepared to face it squarely, the least we can do is to keep away from deliberately misinforming those who rely on our guidance.

In the correction that was published on page 214 last week, I have made clear that the clerical error and the misprint did not in the least affect my final figures which were the basis of my proposition. Hence the statement, "There are many errors of an arithmetical nature which *vitiate entirely* (italics mine) the conclusions that have been drawn", is a gross untruth.

Again, that writer makes a mischievous and wild suggestion which he ought to have verified before going into print. He says that if in place of selecting 1871 as a base, I had taken a more suitable or representative year, say 1911, I would have found that India's population was increasing at a far greater rate than that of France. Similarly, if 1901 had been taken as the basic period, a result such as that with the 1911 base would have been obtained. The following are the results worked out with 1901 as base year:

	India	England & Wales	France
1871	102.4	69.7	92.6
1921	107.6	116.3	97.9
Increase for the half-century	5.2	46.6	5.3

Similarly, with 1911 as base year we get:

	India	England & Wales	France
1871	96.4	62.9	92.1
1921	101.3	105.1	97.4
Increase for the half-century	4.9	42.2	5.2

Our former base 1871 gave the increase for the half-century:

	5.1	66.8	5.7

We observe that the trend indicated by both the years suggested by *The Times of India* only bears out my former proposition that India's increase of population during the last half-century has been more stagnant than that of France, while the increase in England and Wales has been nearly 10 times as great.

As regards the question of birth rate on which our critic is not quite clear, I may refer him to the chapter on the 'Arithmetic of the Problem' in *The Problem of Population* by Harold Cox, where he will find himself described in the following words: "Many people are content to argue as if birth rate by itself settled everything. They even appear to forget that the growth of population depends not on births only, but on the excess of births over deaths."

While we cannot compare the fertility of urban and rural population in the same country on the basis of population per square mile, there is no other satisfactory method of comparing the growth in two different countries. Especially when the territory of one has been steadily increasing, absolute figures are meaningless.

Regarding the rate of increase of population of the world during the last century, *The Times of India* seems to be in doubt. I need only refer the writer to a standard work—A. M. Carr Saunders's *Population*, Oxford University Press. In Chapter VII, dealing with World Population, Saunders computes the rate of increase taking it to compound every year, at 0.7% per annum. This will give us a rate of a little over 7% per decade. According to this, England has been increasing at nearly double the normal rate, and India and France at about one seventh of the normal rate. I did not reckon it to compound and took the simple rate of about 10% per decade. In this I was making a more favourable comparison as far as England was concerned than I need have.

The Times of India should know that such sweeping and irresponsible statements do no credit to any journal which has any pretentions to the confidence of the public. As the rest of that article is not germane to the main theme of my essay it calls for no comments from me.

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5. TRAINING FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

The word "Democracy" is on everybody's lips. The Imperialist has the greatest need to use it to dupe his victims. The Capitalist takes shelter under it to put his men in the councils of the nation to mould the national policy to suit his business. The Fascist falls back on it to strengthen the party. The Nazi resorts to it to eliminate all who are not of his nation. The Communist appeals to it to create class war. There are hardly any who want it for its own sake.

True democracy should be all-pervading. It is not merely a political device. It is an outlook on life. Therefore, governing one people for the benefit of another is alien to the spirit of democracy. Holding power over a few, to make them work for oneself, is also anti-democratic. Similarly, Nazism and Fascism are anything but democratic. There can be no classes or class-war in a true democracy. All these inconsistencies arise because of a faulty understanding of democracy. All countries, which took part in the Global War II, turned dictatorships during the war, while professing democracy in peace time. What we are is seen best under a crisis which has no room for cloaks. So we may presume that all those countries which were masquerading as democracies were really dictatorships in their philosophy of life.

This line of argument is strengthened when we study their everyday activity. Your attitude cannot be democratic only in politics if your whole outlook otherwise is aristocratic. If we want to be democrats in our political organization we should live democracy every day in all walks of life. We should have democracy in economic life too. This means decentralized controls. Hence centralized industries and democracy cannot go together. If we want political democracy we must start with decentralized industries as the training ground.

Especially the idea of democracy in Indian culture is far-reaching. It is "Swadharma" based on our duties to others and self-control. In a democracy of the Indian ideology, each individual will govern himself according to the highest ideals of "dharma" or duties. When each citizen lives on that plane of existence, there will

be no need for the police or the army, for each man is his own policeman and general. A man does not steal, not because he will be hauled up before a court of law, but because to own property itself is wrong and to covet another's goods is sinful.

To attain this attitude in life it would be necessary to practise self-control and self-discipline every day and contemplate on our duties towards our fellowmen. Gandhiji has prescribed this drill in his scheme of rural reconstruction in the form of daily sacrificial spinning. This is not enough. We have to cultivate self-dependence and self-reliance. For this, in our every day economic life, we have to fall back on decentralized methods of production. Centralized industries make the workers depend on the judgment of the executives, and the workers develop implicit obedience instead of stalwart self-reliance.

If we wish every citizen to shoulder his responsibility for the nation, we must provide him with a school for his training. This can only be done by arranging his daily round of duties in such a way that in following them he develops in the way we want him to. The constant school for the development of personality is work. Hence we have to provide that type of work as will conduce to a healthy growth of citizenship. This, as we have seen, we have in decentralized industries. Therefore, if we desire to prepare our citizens to assume responsibility and self-government we must organize their work in the form of decentralized industries in all concerns aiming to supply the everyday needs of the people.

When our aim is democracy we shall be cutting the branch we are standing on, if we resort to centralized methods of production to meet the necessaries of life. The call to "industrialize" our country is diametrically opposed to our professions towards political democracy. Let us, therefore, not follow blindly the lead given by interested parties but take stock of the situation and choose the course that will prepare us for the goal we seek.

6. DEMOCRACY—FORMAL OR DHARMIC

Why should there be a constitution? It is to lay down the respective duties of the citizen and the Government and to correlate them. It should not be a mere set of rules to tell us how to carry on the work of Government.

What do we mean by democracy? Western democracies are largely formal and are paper affairs. The people elect their representatives, and hibernate. Then these representatives rule for a certain term of years, while the electorate is buried. That is not a true democracy. A true democracy must be a living union between the Government and the people. For example, a hostel-warden makes rules. The students are not permitted to go to the cinema without his permission. But they do go. That is a democracy on paper. The other type of democracy is the democracy of the mother, of the home. She does not refuse you food because you come late. She does not run the home by rules. She directs it by love. Her loving thoughts go with you the twenty four hours of the day. She governs, if we may say so, by the "rod of love." It is a moral, duty-based democracy. The power used is creative, not destructive. The rules do not cause suspicion, bitterness or hatred or lead to thievish ways. The love of the mother makes you hesitate to wound her; she appeals to your sense of moral duty. You feel you must share everything with the rest of the family. You work together for the common good. Thus the Government must also rule with a sense of moral duty. We must ourselves be ready to suffer for the sake of the welfare of others.

Here is an illustration taken out of the recent so-called "sugar-cane Satyagraha" which was reported in these columns last month. A sugar factory was built. The owners did not think of the need of sugar-cane until the last moment. The people were making jaggery as usual for themselves and for the people of Mathurai. The factory wondered how it might secure that sugar-cane. It learned that the Government of India had passed a Sugar-Cane Act under which the Provincial Governments might control the sugar producing. It persuaded the Madras Government to pass an order to insist on permits for jaggery-making. The price was to be controlled.

The people were to bring cane even 20 miles away at their own expense. That is a good example of legalistic democracy, Government functioning with no real sense of responsibility for the welfare of the people as a whole. Then some workers came in to help the cane-growers to secure their rights. It was an example of a real democracy working for the welfare of society. In that kind of democracy citizens must be ready, if necessary, to lose their own property, that all may be served.

In a village near Mathurai, the tanks were dry. They were probably built by those who built the great Meenakshi Temple. It was built out of a sense of moral duty. People in those days worked for the good of others. But later these tanks were not kept in order. The Government did not work with a sense of moral duty towards the people. Today the people are without food. Actually the Government should be a partner with the people for the good of society. A milkman is concerned only with the milk his cow gives; it is the Government that must be concerned with the breed of the cow. The Government must have long-term policies. The Government should help to produce good cows, provide farmers with manure, with necessary equipment, irrigation facilities and with good selected seeds. It is the duty of the farmer to farm well, to know that he is but a trustee of the land he farms. The constitution should lay down clearly these functions of the Government and of the people. It is for the constitution to distribute the duties of society, not the booty from society. The present constitution lists even such details as the salary of the President and others. That is unimportant. It gives a wrong emphasis. The Government must begin to work from the point of view of the people and carry out the will of the people.

Legal democracy rules from the top; duty-based democracy originates and derives its power from the people. Here the Cabinet carries out the orders of the people. Formal and law-based constitutions tend to produce hatred, bitterness, suspicion. A *dharmik* (moral), duty-based, constitution gives the people a sense of responsibilities; a willingness to suffer for the good of all. That is *dharma*—the sense of moral obligation. That develops man. Then man becomes something more than a mere animal and thinks in terms of the whole group.

The agriculturists in a moral democracy must learn to cultivate for the good of the nation, not for self. But the farmers today farmed only for profit; in that respect they were no better than the factory-owner who sought only his own profit. The dutiful farmer will not cultivate tobacco for the sake of money, when the country needs food. It was so in olden days. The land belonged to the whole village. Each had his own place in that village economy. Some built the road, some the tanks; all worked together for the common good of the whole village. That was a *dharma*-based democracy. If any one did not co-operate, he was excommunicated; he was condemned to a living death. We must also develop this consciousness of unity—a submerging of the self for the sake of the family, the taluka, the district and finally, the nation. Each has his own duty. That is a true Indian conception.

It is remarkable how even now the villagers respond to this thought. It is in their blood. I have seen it work at Bardoli when villagers left their homes, because the Government insisted on collecting taxes. Our people can still do these things. This sense of duty and responsibility must be developed.

In such a *dharma* or duty-based democracy, the economy will be that of the mother who prepares the *halva* from the best of materials and with no sense of the time involved. She wants the best of food for her children without calculating the cost. Present enterprise-economy thinks primarily of cheap materials, of the lessening of time and effort of production, no matter how much the food value of the *halva* is destroyed. How is it possible to evaluate time and high quality when human values are concerned? The mother-economy is production for use, the present economy is for exchange and profit. The present economy fits into this legalistic democracy. It thinks only of material and economic values; not concerned with our lives and man's welfare. It is a gangster economy. The mother economy feels for the welfare of the children; it is eager to develop human values. It grows in its social consciousness. We do get glimpses of this concept in our ancient history. We must develop the seeds of our hope of the morrow.

The practical implementation of a *dharmik* democracy is the approach of khadi. We are concerned about our neighbour's

welfare and we purchase his products. We work together in our area as a joint family. There must be a unified action. There must be a programme of self-sufficiency. There must be through it all a conception of the whole, based on human values. We must work out new ways in the light of the modern setting. For this we must think in terms of fundamentals.

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7. ADULT EDUCATION

With the advent of political freedom, the Government is turning its attention to various types of nation-building activities. One of the basic activities, especially in a country like ours, steeped in illiteracy, is education. Many of the provincial governments are carrying on campaigns of social education and adult education. These campaigns are pushed forward with the aid of educational films, propaganda material, and with a drive for literacy. The experience gained so far shows that, as far as adults are concerned, the bulk of them revert into illiteracy in course of time. To avoid this, certain means are being adopted to keep up the knowledge gained, through a regular supply of books from village libraries and the publication of popular literature. This form of educating the people is, at the best, one for the purpose of meeting the present exigency.

Adult education of this type largely centres round liquidation of illiteracy, and as has already been said, the campaign does not succeed cent per cent. Hence the major part of the finance spent on this work is not represented by permanent gains. Such education of grown-ups should not be content with pure literacy. True education should prepare the people for life and so it should centre round some activity of the individual who is learning. For instance, if it is an oil-press man whom we wish to educate, he should be taught subjects closely related to his occupation. This may have a literacy backing, but unless it is definitely related to his work, his education will have no stability. It is because of this that Gandhiji has formulated a system of education which became commonly known as "Nai Talim."

Nai Talim is a system of education calculated to develop the whole personality of the individual. It gives information correlated to some activity, preferably an economic, creative work. This system will have a stability of its own. Having taken root in the individual's life, in an activity which has become a second nature to the person, such education will be helpful in developing a culture, which will pervade the life of the nation ultimately. While the present programme of adult education is superficial and provides an exterior veneer of education, it really does not affect the individual's personality; but education through Nai Talim moulds the character, thinking and expression of the individual. And in this way it becomes not only a means of developing the pupil himself but becomes the mainstay of the nation's culture. Thus, Nai Talim being a nation-building activity, we have to be extremely careful in choosing the means and directing its channels.

The introduction of mass education will, therefore, involve close understanding of our rural people. Unfortunately today, those in charge of education have little or no contact with the masses. Hence the present machinery may have to be scrapped or entirely rebuilt if mass education of the type we advocate is to be introduced.

Adult education of the type recommended will need a strong group of teachers who are capable of thinking for themselves and who will be able to gain the confidence of the villagers. At the present time there is a great dearth of capable individuals who will take to this profession. The teaching profession, under Nai Talim, is a nation-building occupation. It needs men of devotion, sacrifice and vision. Unless a sufficient number of young men and women come forward to dedicate themselves to this noble profession, not only from altruistic considerations but also from a patriotic urge, it will be difficult for us to carry through any programme of education for the masses. Under these conditions there can be no appeal stronger than the cause of the nation, to call young men and women to serve the country at the present time. Without their help no organization or artificial programme can help us in fulfilling this need. We hope, therefore, that the young people of our country will come forward to serve the country at this juncture, in this field of activity and thus help to build up a strong India which will be worthy of the freedom that we have acquired.

At the present time many efforts are put forward to educate the people through what has come to be known as constructive work. These centres are striving hard against many difficulties. In many such centres of constructive work, in the different provinces, the one common factor is that the help given by the Government is both halting and much stinted. These constructive work institutions, engaged in nation-building activities, call for generous public support backed by a definite drive from the Government. These two are lacking and the workers are struggling against odds. If our new-found freedom is to mean anything, it should be based on the creation of a citizenship, which would be capable of shouldering the responsibility that freedom brings in its wake. To this end, nation-building activities should be considered fundamental in a country which has recently attained its political freedom. We trust, therefore, the Government will turn their attention now to Constructive Work, and support, not only the existing centres, but open several such new centres all over the country to promote adult education.

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8. POLITICS THEN AND NOW

In a series of articles in the Harijan "Congress and the Constructive Workers", Sri Shankarrao Deo, taking as a text an introductory paragraph of my note on Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh, has tried to make out a case for constructive workers to take part in politics. Running right through his writings there is a continuous misconception of the place of politics in different forms of governments. The Politics of Imperialism is one. Politics under a totalitarian Government takes another shape, and the politics of democracy is of quite a different mould. Swaraj Politics is not necessarily the same as Ramraj politics. His call to constructive workers reminds one of the lines of the old nursery rhyme: "Come into my parlour, says the spider to the fly."

Taken in the context of the old Imperialism, our politics was definitely directed towards getting rid of an alien government.

Under that stress we had developed certain techniques which will naturally have no place in a self-government. Those of us trained in the old methods, find that it has become a part of our nature and it is almost impossible to shake it off. Such hardened old soldiers have to get off the road to make room for the newer type. As long as road-hogging is resorted to by the old-stagers, who have the advantage of the momentum, it is futile to invite others. Sri Shankarrao remarks that "There is no doubt that the present Congress leadership has come in for much severe and unsympathetic criticism, bordering on anger, not only from their political opponents, but surprisingly enough, from their friends also, especially from Constructive Workers". The fact that friends also are dissatisfied should have turned the search-light inwards. But power politics has no time for self-examination. So Sri Shankarrao passes by the opportunity.

Sri Shankarrao recognizes that Gandhiji wanted his constructive programme to be the "dynamo of a non-violent social revolution and not a palliative in the form ot social reform", and he himself states, "the revolutionary potentialities of Gandhiji's constructive programme can only be realized if it is accepted and worked as a whole and as the basis of a new non-violent order". Does Sri Shankarrao profess that the present-day politics is directed towards the establishment of a new non-violent social order? If not, as the constructive workers can have no part in any other political activity, they cannot respond to his call.

Gandhiji has in mind this difference in the Politics of Imperialism and the Politics of Ramraj when he says, "Congress in its present shape and form, i.e., as a propaganda vehicle and parliamentary machine, has outlived its use. India has still to attain social, moral and economic independence in terms of its seven hundred thousand villages as distinguished from its cities and towns". Therefore what we want is not the old technique but the development of a new one to usher in Ramraj.

This does not mean that we need to discard our redoubtable old warriors, as Shankarraoji fears. Gandhiji himself had suggested that instead of being a Premier, Jawaharlalji should rather be the Secretary of a Kisan Premier. Politics should cease to be an end, but become a means to attain our social and economic

freedom. This is the type of politics where constructive workers can usefully play a part. This is the Lok Sevak Sangh of Gandhiji's conception, where Politics is not abandoned but is sublimated into a constructive instrument.

Shankarraoji confesses that this idea of a non-violent society has not found favour with the Congress. He says, "Incidentally it is often forgotten that though the Congress accepted non-violent non-co-operation and Satyagraha of Gandhiji in 1920, it was mainly as a means to achieve political independence and never as the basic principles of the Gandhian way of life or of a new social order. To the vast majority of Congressmen, Gandhiji was essentially a political and not a moral leader. The moral and purificatory side of his programme was accepted by the generality of Congressmen more as a price of his leadership than as a matter of inner conviction or acceptance of a higher moral and spiritual code. No one was more aware of this than Gandhiji himself. We see the truth of this statement in the present-day attitude of the majority of Congressmen towards governmental power and service of the people through constructive work. Today it is a sad sight to see them putting more faith in power than in service."

Can we wonder at it that the Constructive Workers of the Gandhian ideology stand aloof from such a Congress and its politics ?

If the Congress desires to get the co-operation of these workers it will have to offer full scope for the ideals such workers stand for. The present day tendency does not indicate any such move on the part of the Congress Government or the Congress itself. On the other hand, its leaders express a lack of confidence in Constructive Workers and exhibit a tendency to hold power in their own hands. To cite only two instances, the recently formed Government of India Cottage Industries Board has hardly any constructive workers on it. An overwhelming majority of the members are Government representatives of the old Imperialistic order. Even the Gandhi National Memorial Trust is made up of 66⅔% politicians, 25% business magnates and only 8⅓% of constructive workers. This state of affairs has to be reversed if constructive workers are to be attracted. Mere reiteration of messages etc., as at the Jaipur Congress, will not do.

Constructive Workers have to be reassured by actual practice. Shankarraoji himself says, "If the Congress is to achieve the goal set by him (Gandhiji) then it must give a central place to constructive work in its social reconstruction programme. The various constructive organizations that are already there and those which may be formed in the future, must become an organic part of it. The Congress must adopt a plan of decentralized production which should form part of the permanent economy of the country. It must give special attention to the rapid development of cottage and small-scale industries and it must aim at national and regional economic self-sufficiency at least in the essentials of life". When the Congress adopts such a policy and a programme to implement it, we are certain the constructive workers will not wait for an invitation. They will then know they can only realize their ideals through the Congress and will flock to it. Is the Congress prepared to change its power politics for the politics of Ramraj?

Fighting British Imperialism called for political strategy, but to combat the demons of social injustice, poverty and disease requires constructive work of a high order, with staying power, steadfastness of purpose and grim determination. It also needs the backing of a definite governmental policy and drive.

The acceptance of the Politics of Ramraj, therefore, will involve a complete change-over in our standards of values. Material considerations will have to yield place to moral, human and spiritual values. This, in its turn, will have to be reflected in our simple mode of life. Unless this social order is in the horizon, constructive workers cannot, by any "Khedda" operations, be brought into old-time politics. They have to be drawn into it and not beaten into it by verbal jugglery. Let us hope the light will dawn on the leaders before it is too late.

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9. PORTENTS OF A REVOLUTION

The Britishers have gone, but they appear to have left behind them a tradition which has taken a deep root in the

lives of a few of us. It may mean that some of us had been starved of some barbarous pomp and so it is that we wish to enjoy it by maintaining that system even after the originators had gone. Luxury is a sign of decadence. If increase in quantity and quality of production does not keep pace with the rise in the standard of living it is an unhealthy sign. If consumption shifts towards comfort and luxury while production and producers are stifled, it spells danger. The last condition is fast asserting itself in our country. The symptoms are best seen in the capital city of New Delhi. The shifting of population from Pakistan to India has enhanced the evil trend, as a large proportion of the new-comers are non-producers and consumers of a high order.

A symbol of this splendour at the cost of the poor man at the moment is the great city of Delhi itself. In it the palace of the first citizen is one that will put into shade the pomp of the Great Moghuls. The Viceregal lodge contains about 86 residential State rooms with 56 bath rooms attached. Each one of these State rooms could more or less accommodate a middle class family comfortably, as they are more like flats than single rooms. In olden days, when there were no hotels to accommodate distinguished and high born visitors from Great Britain, the Viceroy's house did the duty of a hotel as well. There appears to be no reason why we should continue this tradition at a terrific cost to the poor taxpayer.

This palace has a retinue of 312 household servants and 96 sweepers. Their monthly pay roll runs up to Rs. 25,000 (3 lakhs a year), while their "poor master", the Governor-General himself, gets a salary, which if subjected to super-tax and income-tax, will be equivalent to about Rs. 15,000 a month. The maintenance of those gorgeous liveries of the servants calls for another Rs. 40,000 a year.

To maintain a garden in which the Viceregal lodge officials take pride as being "one of the finest gardens in the world", covering about 290 acres, 363 horticulturists and 'Malis' are engaged. This costs over Rs. 3 lakhs a year. The maintenance of the household costs over 4½ lakhs a year. The Governor-General's palace's annual repairs come to about Rs. 12 lakhs and repairs to the

furniture cost one lakh. The furniture and fittings themselves are valued at Rs. 50 lakhs.

It is not as though this tradition was bequeathed to us. Even during the days of the British Viceroys these extravagances had never reached these heights. In 1938-39 the expenditure on the garden was a little over Rs. 77,000 but today it is about five times that much. Similarly the household establishment expense in 1938-39 was Rs. 1,80,000. Today it is over two and half times that much. Inflation by itself cannot account for the difference.

This picture of India is like a beggar in tattered garments with an empty stomach, sporting a carnation in his button-hole! We wonder if this incongruity never strikes those who perpetrate it. No doubt, all this is an increase in the standard of living! The mansion in York Road was not good enough for the Premier who is always talking of increasing our standard of living, and he had to move into the palace of the Commander-in-Chief! The Ministers are vying with each other in giving garden parties, but when we look at the sum total of benefit that they have conferred on the poor John citizen, we could almost say nil, if not worse.

While the high dignitaries are having such luxurious residences, the clerks and others are suffering for lack of even elementary needs. Of course this might indicate the rapid swelling of the Government departments and thereby increasing their inefficiency. The Administration Report of the Estate Officer shows that in 1939 there were 6472 residential quarters which had swollen to 15,404 last year. Applications for accommodation had increased from 10,000 in 1939 to over 70,000 in 1948 and the office accommodation from 7,57,000 sq. ft. in 1939 to 56,34,000 sq. ft. in 1948. Does this reflect increase in efficiency of service rendered or disclose a pathological bloating? We must remember that since 1939 nearly a third of India has gone off into Pakistan. That being so, this terrific increase in the Government staff, with increasing complaints of inefficiency, can only be considered an unhealthy swelling.

We fear all these signs of the time are reminiscent of the conditions that prevailed towards the close of Czarist Russia. We hope and pray that these do not portend a similar fate awaiting India. Imperial splendour at one end and dire need and poverty at

the other is the stuff revolutions are made of. These conditions are increasingly evident in our land. Symptomatic treatment, such as arresting of Communists and Socialists, is no cure for this malady of overgrowth, an intense acromegaly in the body politic. No shibboleths can heal this, not even "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai", the last resort of our leaders in a tight corner. Drastic change in our body politic is indicated. Will our leaders wake up in time to avoid a catastrophe or are we heading on to a violent revolution such as the one that overtook the Czarist regime ?

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10. COST OF POLICING

We have been assured time and again that India will not pursue an aggressive Military Policy and that all that is intended is to keep an adequate police force. Is this policy reflected in the national expenditure ? The following comparative percentages of the Military budgets to national expenditures are culled from "United Nations World."

Norway	8
Canada	12
United Kingdom	13
U. S. S. R.	17
U. S. A.	25
France	32
India	47
Pakistan	55

What shall we say to a poor man who spends nearly half of what he gets on a chowkidar to take care of his empty house ? The real policy of a government is not in its declarations, but must be embodied in the records of its activities which the accounts should disclose.

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11. THE GLORIOUS VIOLENCE !

In times past, wars were more or less confined to self-seeking leaders who went to wage war with their neighbours either for self-aggrandizement, revenge or loot. In all these cases these leaders gathered round themselves men of the type of brigands, out-laws and riff-raffs of society who carried out their behests with zest, as these sadists were so built as to enjoy inflicting cruelty on others. We have examples of these in Chengiz Khan, Alexander the Great, Nadir Shah and Napoleon.

As the Industrial Revolution came along and centralized industries, with their manufacturing factories situated in one country, with their raw materials being drawn from different parts of the world and seeking markets for their finished products elsewhere, came into being, the need for controlling politically the raw material producers and markets and safeguarding the high-ways became great. This realization of the necessity for political control over other nations and policing the ocean routes, led to the modern political organization, commonly called Imperialism. With the expansion of centralized industries, some countries began to specialize in manufactures to the neglect of Agriculture. This increased the dependence of such countries further. In the same measure as the dependence on others increased they had to increase their command over the producers of raw material and food. This led to the growth of organized violence, which more or less synchronizes with expansion of centralized industries and is an inseparable Siamese Twin of this method of production.

With the need of violence in industrial interests, it became necessary to elevate what was once murder, dacoity and brigandage to the dignity of national service, so as to clothe those engaged in it with respectability and harness the youthful patriotism and idealism of the younger generation. In Great Britain they enhance the status of all offices in the Army, Navy and Air Forces to one of a noble profession. To clothe them with sanctity they put up memorials for distinguished fighters and large scale killers in places of worship such as St. Paul's Cathedral or the Westminster Abbey. Such was the method adopted to glorify violence in the West.

To enthuse young people it was necessary to harness their emotions also to the war chariot. This was done by organizing propaganda of hate of other countries and their culture. Ultimately the result of this is what we find today in Europes—devastation, wholesale destruction, starvation and nakedness. Violence has not yet proved a satisfactory means of bringing about or maintaining peace. On the other hand, it is the one weapon which has stood between the common man and peace and prosperity.

In India, we had not reached the stage of industrialization which would demand the upsetting of our moral codes and standards of values. But it would seem as though we are fast drifting on to the dangerous waters in which Europe has found its doom. Pt. Jawaharlal is confusing military power as a means of attaining peace. He sings the same old song as many before him had sung, when he declared at the time of welcoming the Cruiser, H. M. I. S. "Delhi" that "We shall always remain in this country as men of peace and our country will ever remain devoted to peaceful objects and pursuits", and added, "Unfortunately in this world today, it is not enough to merely desire peace. One has to have the grit and strength to keep the peace and sometimes to make others keep peace. So in this world any country, which seeks freedom and independence, must be strong enough to maintain it". Does this not sound as an echo of what we have heard the various European statesmen hold out to their people a few years ago as the reason for arming themselves to the teeth? Apart from this, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru probably forgets that the Cruiser runs on mineral oil which will not be available to us should a state of belligerency arise, in which case we may have to take to charcoal or build up an armada of back-water Kutmorans (Madras type of fishing boats)!

A statement of this kind may easily be passed over as the emotional ebullition of our youthful Prime Minister. But soon after comes a declaration by the Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, that the Government had revoked the previous decision to keep down the strength of the Indian Army and have embarked on a policy of expansion of the Indian Defence Forces.

As though this was not enough, our Governor-General speaking at the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun, assures us that

"Everybody in India now is war-minded. Everybody talks of war and wants war." He goes on to glorify the profession of murder and destruction as a noble one. He waxes eloquent with the following words, "Of all the professions in India today,—whether it is the doctor's, the sanitary officer's, the lawyer's, the teacher's, the civil servant's or the barber's,—of all the professions, high and low in this country, the Army is the most popular profession among the people, popular not in the sense that they all like to join the Army, but popular in the sense that they love the Army. There is no greater encouragement or pleasure to people than to be loved by other people. That is the biggest addition to your salary.

"Over and above the money you get as salary you have the current of the living love of the people. The old Commanders-in-chief and other senior military officials, including the old subedars, did not get it. But today everybody loves you. Therefore, every rupee that you are now getting from the Government is a golden rupee, not a silver rupee. It is gilded with the love of the people and you are, therefore, very lucky.

"I wish I were young. I would have surely joined the Army, if for nothing else, at least for the pleasure of being admitted here and taught as a cadet in this institution." We sympathise with him in that he is unable to join the Forces to take an active part in this "noble" profession. Like the Prime Minister he adds a post-script, "I wish no war should come and overtake us and that we should always be threatening and never have to wage war. It is good to keep your fangs like a cobra in your mouth, but not bite anybody. We have to keep arms, but it is not good to wage war". May we humbly remind our great Governor-General that these were the sentiments that governed the Americans before Hiroshima, but the atom bomb proved too strong for their pious resolutions? Let us beware and not play with fire.

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12. HOW NOT TO DO IT

To raise funds for a group of institutions working for social welfare, a carnival was organized at Madras last month.

Some highly placed Constructive Workers drew my attention to the carnival and stated that it was functioning as a Gambling Den. Not being prepared to take this verdict without further examination, I walked into the carnival and found that their description was only partly right. No doubt the 'gambling den' part of it was not an adequate enough description, but there was more to it than caught the eye.

ANTI-SOCIAL MEANS

The sign boards over the booths were all familiar public social bodies bearing well-known names throughout the Presidency, such as All-India Women's Conference, Women's Welfare Department, Children's Aid Society, Seva Samajam and a host of others. On nearing the booths, one caught sight of some leading society ladies, staunchly supported by a bevy of young ladies, fashionably dressed, such as the ones usually to be met with in a Government House party. It aroused my curiosity as to what these ladies were doing. To my dismay, I discovered that booth after booth consisted of lucky dips, shooting galleries, "ringing the duck" and various other similar devices and games of chance, miscalled games of skill. Some of the booths appeared empty and on enquiry, I was told the Police raided them the previous night and closed down about a score of these as being "gambling dens". It is deplorable that these anti-social activities, that trade on the gambling instinct in man and on the greed to get something for nothing, should be harnessed for the purpose of collecting money, though they may be for laudable ends. We have been constantly urging the public to create sufficient public opinion to do away with horse-racing and other fashionable methods of gambling. But here was an attempt to raise funds by amusements which were bound to give a wrong direction to public education, and that too by bodies avowedly working for the good of the people.

There were one or two worth-while booths which were aiming at public welfare. The "general check-up" conducted by the T. B. Association, Blood Bank by the Red Cross and the working model of the Kolar Gold Fields, were perhaps the exceptions to the general catering to the lower nature of man.

DIGRESSION ?

The central part of the ground was traversed by a noisy train on a truck line which, after every few minutes, ran across the grounds drowning all other noises. We are familiar enough, especially in Madras, with over-loaded trams and trains. It was beyond me why this method of transport should have been included in what was evidently meant to be an amusement park. One would have imagined that the office goer would have to undergo this nerve-racking means of transport twice a day to and from the office. In addition to these, why they themselves should voluntarily get into this train is beyond human comprehension. This is an indication that Madras is fast deteriorating in its choice of pastime. This is a serious symptom of a nervously over-wrought population seeking excitement and digression in meaningless activities. Its close approximation to the American Amusement Parks, without the redeeming features of some of the educative booths one finds in such entertainment organizations, is an alarming sign.

MEANINGLESS

One of the incomprehensible sections of the Carnival was the "Piccadilly Circus". In one corner various illuminated signs advertised commercial goods. In the centre, was a statue of Eros, built as a cheap imitation of the one at Piccadilly Circus in London. Even the end of Regent Street coming into the circus is indicated as well by an imitation "Lyons Corner House". One can understand the British Tommy, away from home, taking a delight in such reminiscences of his home land. But most of the visitors to this carnival were blissfully innocent of what "Piccadilly" was or what it stood for. It shows a woeful lack of imagination on the part of the organizers. If this had happened prior to India becoming a Republic, one would have felt inclined to attribute it to the desire of the organizers to create an "Inferiority complex" in the minds of the visitors, and to train them into looking up towards everything British. But even for this it appears an anachronism.

At a time when the Government is calling for productive effort, this encouragement of wasteful expenditures baffles the serious onlooker. Thousands of electric lights were used in the decora-

tions and fire works were illumining the sky. Amongst the crowd could be seen not merely the man in the street with his family, but also high Government officials and Ministers moving about like Queen-bees, with their retainers hovering about them. The whole picture was one which was out of setting in a nation wishing to put forth its efforts to rebuild itself. It spelt of decadence and decay. Those who are responsible for organizing such shows would do well to view these undertakings in their proper setting, and those who have taken part from the various organizations should ponder over their responsibilities and see if they are furthering the cause for which their institutions stand, by trading on the weaknesses of man to build up their financial resources. We can only congratulate the vigilance of the Police in closing down some of the gambling dens, run perhaps by less influential public persons. We wish they had done their job thoroughly and closed down the whole show. On the whole, the Carnival was a cheap and useless attempt at amusing the public and the organizers can hardly be said to have justified the efforts they seem to have put in getting up the show. In every public work we should be cautious to ensure that the means befit the ends. It is a responsibility we dare not ignore. By a wrong choice of means we may be destroying a more important set of values.

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13. PACIFISM AND WAR

"War is an unmitigated evil to be shunned" will express the sentiment of the common man, woman and child in any nation. Yet periodical wars of global magnitude have become the order of the day. If the love of peace is so deeply ingrained, and widely spread in the common man why have we these holocausts? How can we prevent them? Had not the generations that have gone before us tried to solve these fundamental problems of human existence? If so, can we learn anything from them? Can we contribute anything further?

THE SEED OF WAR

War is the collective manifestation of friction between single individuals. Amongst individuals an eruption takes place when one person seeks to enforce his will on another. We desire a certain thing and seek to materialise that desire by an action directed by our will-power. If our desire goes contrary to the interest of another, friction ensues; this, in the aggregate, leads to group conflicts, or wars. Hence, if we would eradicate this weed from society it would call for the training of our wills in complete alignment with the needs of society. In other words the solution lies in developing self-control and self-discipline to make us worthy members of society. This was the basis of the Hindu approach to the problem.

If we fail to keep in mind the individual and his conduct, but proceed to attack the projection of this malformation into society, we shall be guilty of treating the symptom instead of the disease. At every turn the act of the individual affects society. Even these global wars have their roots in the isolated acts of individuals. Therefore, the individual and the life he leads demand our scrutiny.

IN ANCIENT TIMES

There is a fundamental difference in the social manifestation of wars of the past and those of the twentieth century. Formerly wars were waged by individuals for revenge, for loot, for acquisition of territory or for self-aggrandizement. They were fought by mercenaries or by persons closely allied to the belligerent parties. The general mass of people kept out of these conflicts. Under such circumstances, the evils of war, bad as they always are, were limited.

THE REMEDY

The way to meet the situation was also simple. The *Varnashram* provided a quarantine for the bellicose. The Kshatriyas were given the monopoly of policing the State internally and of defending the population from external aggression. This was the sociological device.

Culturally, the fighting man was not given the highest status. Anger was considered the base of all crimes. The standard of values was weighted against all whose actions lead to conflict.

Material wealth was sterilized of its glamour. Those who were assigned the highest place in society were those who followed their path of duty to their fellowmen. One of the fertile grounds for conflict was selfishness and acquisition of property. Renunciation was covered with a mantle of sanctity to counteract man's natural greed.

There was a preconcerted plan to block all the sources of violence. Under this order of things our country remained non-violent for centuries, though she had to suffer violence from invaders from time to time.

MODERN WARS

Within living memory wars have ceased to be personal conflicts to satisfy individual desires. They have assumed nation-wide proportions. It is no longer Alexander marching to conquer the world, but it is the British waging war against the Germans. This change has been brought about primarily by a change in the economic organization of society.

With the "Industrial Revolution" in Europe, centralized methods of production came into vogue. This meant that the plant and machinery were situated in one convenient place, while the world was scoured for raw materials which were brought over thousands of miles of ocean routes to the central plant. After manufacture, the finished goods had to be taken to the four corners of the earth for sale. This method logically led to the situation where the owners of the plant and machinery had, of necessity, to keep close control over the sources of raw materials and to regulate their markets, while policing the ocean-routes to keep them clear and open for the traffic of their merchandise. All this demanded the Army, the Navy and the Air Force to control the lives of other peoples and nations and guide them into such channels as would ensure the satisfaction of the needs of the machine-owners and their world-wide ramifications.

MORAL DEGRADATION

To this end it would not do to impute moral values into the equation. Violence has taken a central place in this economic organization. It has to command votaries from all sections of society. How can that be done if anger were considered a crime? On the

other hand violence has to be glorified or deified. This cannot be achieved by stigmatising all fighters who make a profession of killing as "murderers", and officers as "mass murderers", and Generals as "arch murderers". No; murdering has to be made an honourable profession. The Army is made a noble calling, the Navy into an aristocratic allegiance and the Air Force becomes the acme of educational attainment! With these warped standards of values impregnated into youthful minds, in season and out of season, it has been possible to misguide millions, and even women amongst them! Nations have to wage war against nations, hatred and suspicion have to be cultivated to feed the fire of national enmity.

LIVING

Under this octopus, the life of the individual is also set in lines which will absorb the production of the machines. Social values are affixed to modes of life demanding a large consumption of machine-made products. A man is honoured, not for his character, nor for the discharge of his duty to his fellowmen, but for the abundance of the things he possesses. This humanly low type of material living has been termed a "High Standard of Living". Renunciation has no place in this order of things. Self-indulgence, rather than self-discipline, is held up as a goal to pursue. The whole scheme of life is weighted in favour of violence.

PACIFISM

If our analysis is true, then no amount of sentimental objection to war can be of any avail. Conscientious objectors in war time only generate more violence. A desire to banish war, coupled with a longing for peace, must materialise in a mode of life in which violence has no part. To the cry of superficial sentimentalists, the war-mongers had offered a sop,—the League of Nations. They also promised to limit armaments. Can we accept from a seasoned drunkard as an earnest of his teetotalism a gift of an empty bottle or shall we be satisfied with his promise of drinking in limited quantities in future? Yet the world sat back contented, as though Mars had been banished for ever. Was this willingness to be easily satisfied rooted in the fear of facing a form of life, in which violence being eschewed, it would be hard to maintain a "Standard of living" without things we have got used to?

No superficial attempts to create a public opinion by slogans of "Save the World for Democracy" etc., will solve the problem. The innumerable international security conferences have proved to be only endeavours to "keep the other fellow from fighting"; neither can we outlaw war by any international legislation.

We have to face facts sternly and remove the seeds of war from our midst, cost what it may. Unless we go about our business with a grim determination any amount of political reshuffling will not come to our rescue. Those of us, who are prepared to go to the uttermost, should work with might and main during "peace time" or rather during the absence of kinetic war. We ought not to be content with surface alterations. The Political aspect of war is the least important. We have to reach down to the daily routine of life of every citizen and from it weed out all parasitic growth.

This brings academic considerations of International Pacifism to earth and pins it to the work-a-day life of man. Simplifying our lives in this manner and to this end is not a form of asceticism but a resultant of our own limitations. It calls for self-control and self-discipline of a high order. We cannot have self-indulgence and pacifism at the same time. The necessary ground for this programme has already been prepared by the ancients by the standards of values they had set. Based on that culture Gandhiji's pacifism manifests itself in his constructive programme. We have to re-align the lay-out of society if we desire to outlaw war, limit our consumption goods to those which have been produced under our ken and for which we shall be prepared to assume moral responsibility. This is the foundation of Gandhiji's self-sufficiency programme. Every nation should produce its own primary needs—food, clothing and shelter. Foreign trade there may be only in luxury goods. Nations do not go to war for this. If England is beleaguered and is in danger of starvation she will stick at nothing to get the food she wants.

The present economic organization rests on violence for its foundation. If we seek peace we have to rebuild our social structure on conditions which will have no need for resorting to violence as a means of maintaining ur social order. No tinkering with this problem will answer the purpose. Hard, as it may seem,

we have to face realities. So far the Pacifists of the West contented themselves by enlisting public opinion against war, ignoring the fact that great possessions arising out of centralized methods of production and peace are poles apart. The high standards of the West cannot be maintained without holding in bondage the weaker nations of the East. Are the Pacifists prepared to make the necessary fundamental adjustments in their own life, in the first instance, and in the life of their nation eventually? This is the crucial test. No make-shift arrangement or patch-work will bring us lasting peace or goodwill amongst the nations.

We have to awaken the moral consciousness of the youth and call a spade a spade. Let there be no soft pedalling on mass-murders, euphemistically called "Wars". Let the youth know when he enlists in the "Forces" that he is joining a gang of international murderers and brigands. We cannot call in the noble patriotism, enthusiasm and energy of youth into action for so vile a purpose. Let us rouse the moral consciousness and lower money considerations and material values. If we succeed in doing these, then alone shall we be practical Pacifists, working towards a time when youth shall learn war no more. Thus shall we usher in an age of peace in this war-torn world and rescue civilization from barbarism.

* * * *

14. THE WIND AND THE WHIRLWIND

What is called progress and civilization today is a Marathon race where the laurels are for the most devilish. When in the opening years of this century the Japanese defeated the Russians, the former was hailed as a World Power. When France could not outbid the violence of Germany, she lost her status as a power. The criterion is the achievement of perfection of savagery and barbarism. The latest distinction on this unenviable career has been attained by the users of the abomination of desolation—the Atomic bomb. We do not grudge America or Great Britain their claim to such hellish greatness, for we know as certainly as the night follows

day, these demons of today, will in their turn, perish by the sword. But this is not what need detain us. These are only passing phases. The history of Great Britain is but as a grain of sand on the shores of time.

Why is it that al science runs a-whoring after violence and destruction? Is humanity on a downward grade? Is violence becoming the life of the world today? These are some of the questions that should rack our brains.

If we probe deep enongh we shall find that the development of the higher nature of man—character and personality—is not keeping pace with the advance made by his mental faculty. A spirited horse has to be held in by bit and bridle. We cannot afford to give loose reins. Man's self-control is being lost, relative to the advancement made by Science. Science is good, but when it outstrips man's character and upsets the poise, it makes a slave of man and generates violence. Then what is the remedy if we are not to sow the wind and reap the whirlwind?

There is a time-lag between the development of human personality and the advancement of mental faculties. The former is a slow process as all things with a permanent value tend to be. We cannot hand a child an open flaming torch. The child will be in danger of setting itself on fire. Fire is good. It has lighted the way of human progress. But it is out of place in the hands of an immature person. When the situation points to a tragedy, it is time for us to call a halt. Science is good. But we seem to have reached a stage where we need to bivouac awhile, to take stock of the situation and pull ourselves together if we are determined not to let circumstances run away with our lives. Have we the strength to do it? Or will humanity roll headlong downhill gathering irresistible momentum and dash itself to pieces against the rocks ahead?

This question is not an international one only. It arises in our every day life in various forms. In the final analysis the question, machine vs. human labour in our country, is of the same origin. As things are, mechanical advancement has gone so far ahead of the development of human personality that man is becoming a greater and greater slave to the machine, that he is in imminent danger

of losing himself. When people say that we, of the non-violent school, are against machinery they are uttering a truth in a relative setting. Machines are good, but if we have not developed sufficient control over ourselves they will lead us into the paths of violence, into destruction. All this feverish planning, for rapid industrialization as post-war reconstruction, based on capital goods imported from abroad is sure to lead us along the way all industrialized countries have gone,—on the high road of violence, imperialism and destruction. Discretion dictates caution. Shall we heed it? Or shall we in our pride of achievement head for a fall?

* * * *

15. TEMPTING RUDRA

Shri C. Rajagopalachari has the credit of having brought into existence a Board of Research in Atomic Energy with Professor H. J. Bhabha as Chairman. In the statement announcing the formation of the Board, Rajaji assures us that "the atomic energy resources of India will not be frittered away or go to waste", and adds that "it would be a mistake to associate atomic research only with destructive activities".

Atomic research has been an expensive luxury of the rich Western nations. They have spent untold millions to harness Rudra, the God of Destruction. What is going to be our budget for it? If such funds were available, should not researches on cattle-breeding and food production be a first charge in a starving country where production per acre is amongst the lowest in the world?

Of course, atomic research is not only for destruction. Has anybody used it for anything else? The road to hell is paved with good intentions. May not this Board prove to be a high road?

We agree that atomic energy may be a two-edged sword, but to wield such a weapon calls for a high degree of discipline. Fire is a good thing. It has lit the path of the progress of man since the dawn of civilization. On this reasoning, can we hand a torch to a child and expect it to keep the house from burning? At the

moment, wherever we turn, greed, jealousy and hatred face us in the world. Is such a world fit to handle this weapon? May it not prove a spark in the ammunition magazine? Let us not play with fire.

As far as we can gauge, we must confess that we have not yet found the needed discipline in the management of our public affairs to enable us to have that assurance that we shall not be as the other men are! The Americans were tempted beyond their power by the possession of this Tree of Knowledge. What guarantee can we furnish that we have greater self-control and self-discipline than the original atom bomb users? If the sharing in the loot from Germany and Japan, against which we had already protested in these columns, represents the policy of the Government of which Shri Rajagopalachari is a distinguished member, we fear to notice the direction indicated by the straws in the wind. Rudra may be summoned sooner than we think! We should know our own limitations and programme our activities accordingly.

While the country is crying for researches in so many fields, does this type of work call for such priority? Can we not utilize our resources in more fruitful ways?

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16. WORLD SECURITY

The much advertised San Francisco Conference has produced a scheme which it is claimed will make for peace and will guarantee the four freedoms for which it has been working. The method it has adopted is to entrust the policing functions to a group of "Big Powers", assisted by a few smaller ones. This group will wield the big stick and keep down the recalcitrant ones. In effect, it is the old League of Nations with a few frills added, and we fear it will meet the same fate as its predecessor, as the basic evils in society, which produce such holocausts as these World Wars, have not been tackled at all. The remedy sought is too superficial.

In the history of mankind these attempts at making the world safe from the onslaughts of greed and avarice are not

novel. In Christendom the Church, not content with reserving for itself the moral power consequent on its spiritual leadership, but with the help and allegiance of other temporal States and with the sanction of physical force and violence, tried for centuries to play the role of arbiter and to restore the rule of reason amongst nations; but the savage and barbaric hordes of Europe reduced its efforts to futility as these recurring World Wars have witnessed. The heart of man was not touched.

The attempt made by Islam was through ethical means. They aimed at making humanity a brotherhood, where all distinction of caste, colour and economic inequalities would be abolished. This method was much more successful, but as it confined itself only to the followers of the Prophet, it did not naturally attain world-wide dimensions in practice. It has yet great unexplored possibilities.

In India, the Hindus of old launched an elaborate plan to sterilize greed and avarice by setting up cultural standards of values, which will reduce the evils of economic competition and lay emphasis on the value of the development of personality. In the Varnashram Dharma the ones who exercised merely rights were put down as the lowest group. The profit seeking Vaisya had no high social status, while the protector of the people, the Kshatriya, had a status all his own, independent of his wealth or material possessions. The dispossessed Brahmin, whose position of influence, was based on the service of his fellow-men, occupied the pinnacle of respect. This system has also fallen short of its possibilities, because in the course of time these distinguishing ideals were lost sight of and status was attached to birth rather than to the form of service rendered to society.

The San Francisco Conference, granting the charter of World Security by the agreement and help of the "Big Powers", borders on the ludicrous. Whoever has heard of the small nations being a menace to World Security ? It is the greed of the "Big Powers" that has plunged the world in streams of blood from time to time. For these very miscreants to be asked to guarantee World Security is like entrusting the safety of our banking houses to a team of gangsters. What is needed is the disintegration and liquidation of these very "Big Powers" and a fundamental change in the economic outlook and organization.

We have to accept the fact that all modern wars are caused by economic competition for raw materials and markets. This competition is made keener still by a complex standard of living, built up by a whole series of artificially created wants, which do not satisfy any natural needs. This being so, there can be no world security until this malady is attacked. The remedy cannot be mere physical force and restraint caused by fear. The real cause has to be grappled with, and a solution found by means of cultural forces which will counteract the acquisitive tendencies of man and crush his selfishness. This calls for the setting up of standards based on simplicity of life and building up of character and personality. Only by such means will it be possible to secure to the world, composed of the weak and the strong, the simple and the sophisticated, a state of affairs where all can follow their several avocations free from fear, want and slavery, and enjoy freedom of thought and speech. In practice, to achieve this in the economic sphere, it would be necessary to curb the profit motive and control the centralized industries and at the same time regulate our consumption in the light of real needs.

Nadir Shah invaded India for booty. This booty was in the form of hoards of precious metal, jewellery and gems. Such is not the booty our moderns look for. They want instruments of production, raw materials and markets. It was the search for such booty that brought in the global wars.

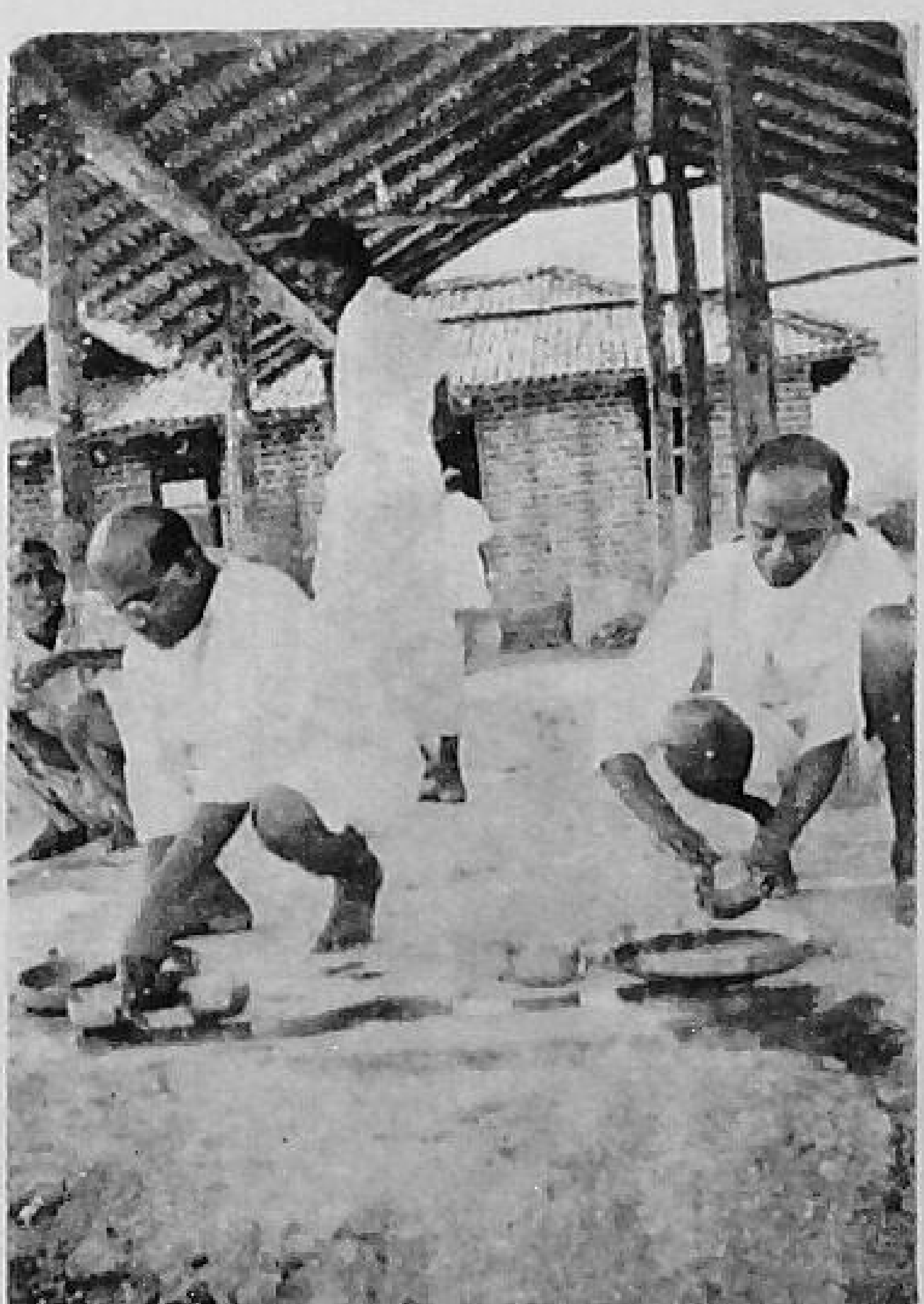
After the first World War, the "conquerors" unburdened Germany of her colonies and claimed reparations to compensate for the loss caused by the wars.

Now again Germany has been "vanquished". The international vultures have foregathered where the carcase is. An assembly of delegates from the 'Principal Allied Countries' have drafted a "Final Act and an Accord" to pool all German patents in Allied countries. India has also been dragged into this arrangement, by whom, we do not know.

When we buy a stolen article knowing it to be such, we become morally responsible for the stealing that had preceded the transaction. India refrained from entering this war. Can we now ask for a share in the booty consequent on this war without assuming moral responsibility for the carnage?

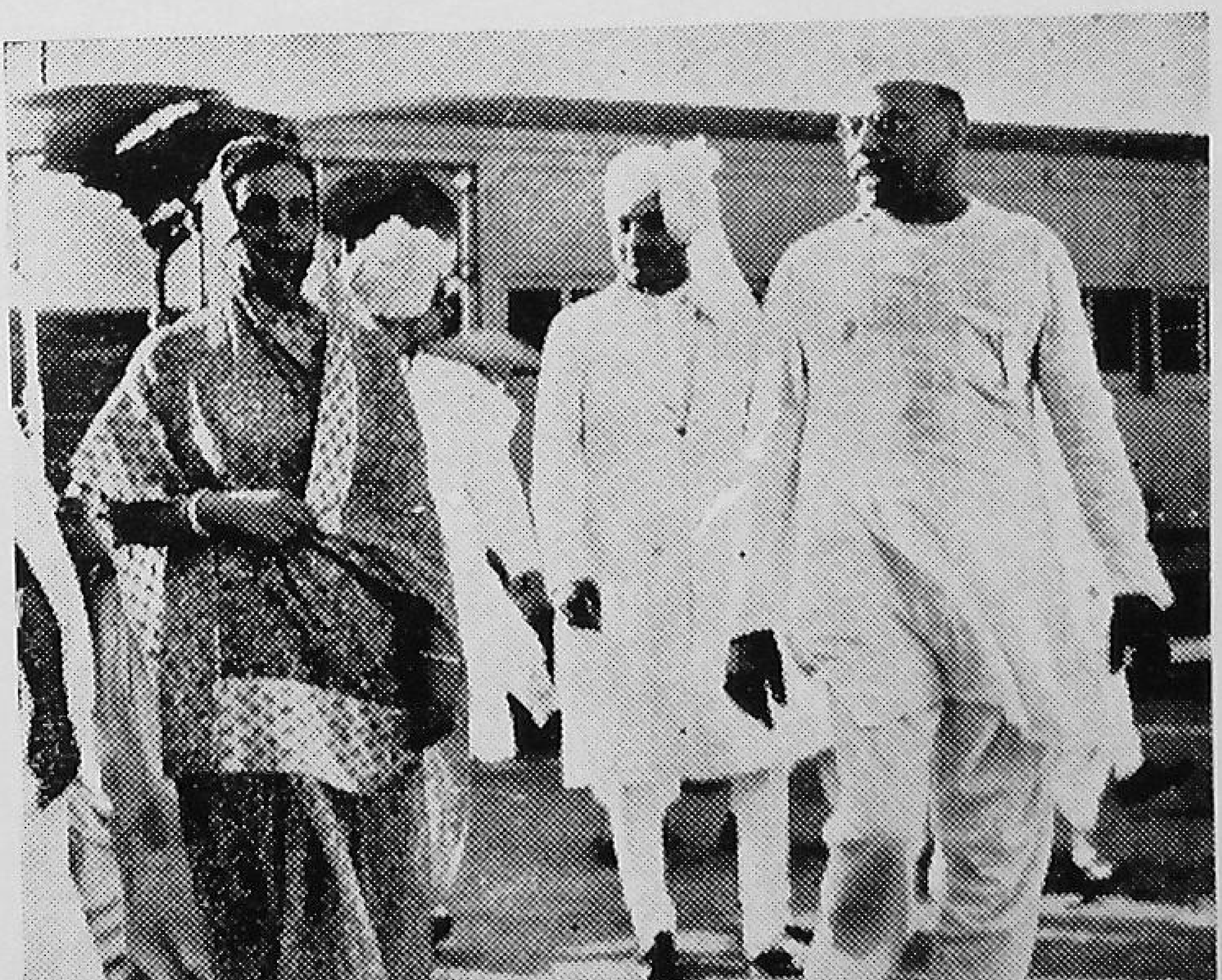
Can we buy and bring into our country German plants taken over by the Allies as "reparations"? There is a list of 51 German war plants, which are for sale, circulated among the Indian Chambers of Commerce. These are stained with injustice, cruelty, avarice and human blood. Are we prepared to take these on our hands? If we do, we become Imperialists no less than the British or the Americans. If India stands for the freedom of all suppressed nations, Germany being one such today, our National Government should protest against such loot, and ban such tainted property.

With his Sisters and
sporting an imperial

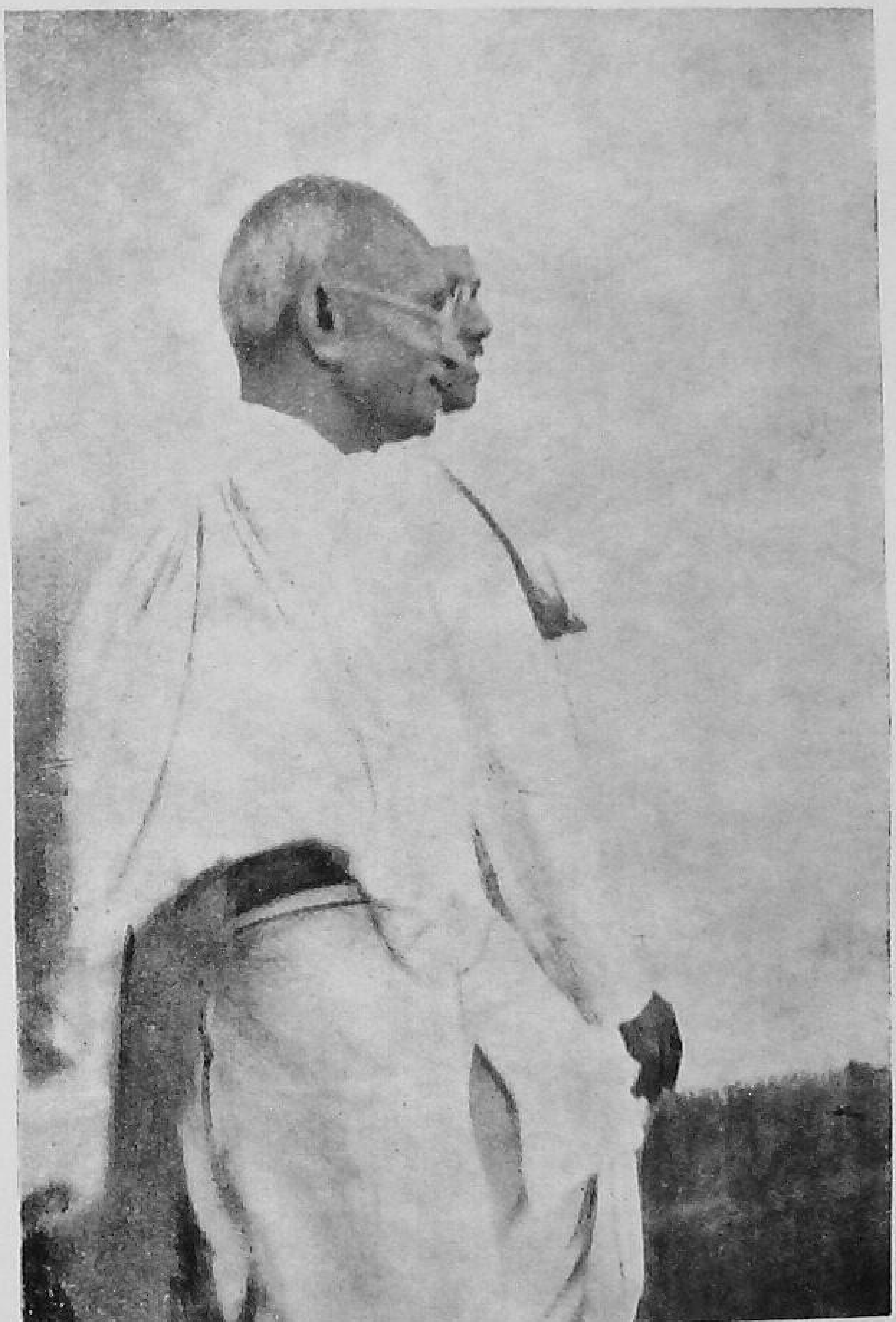


Washing Plates
at the Community Kitchen

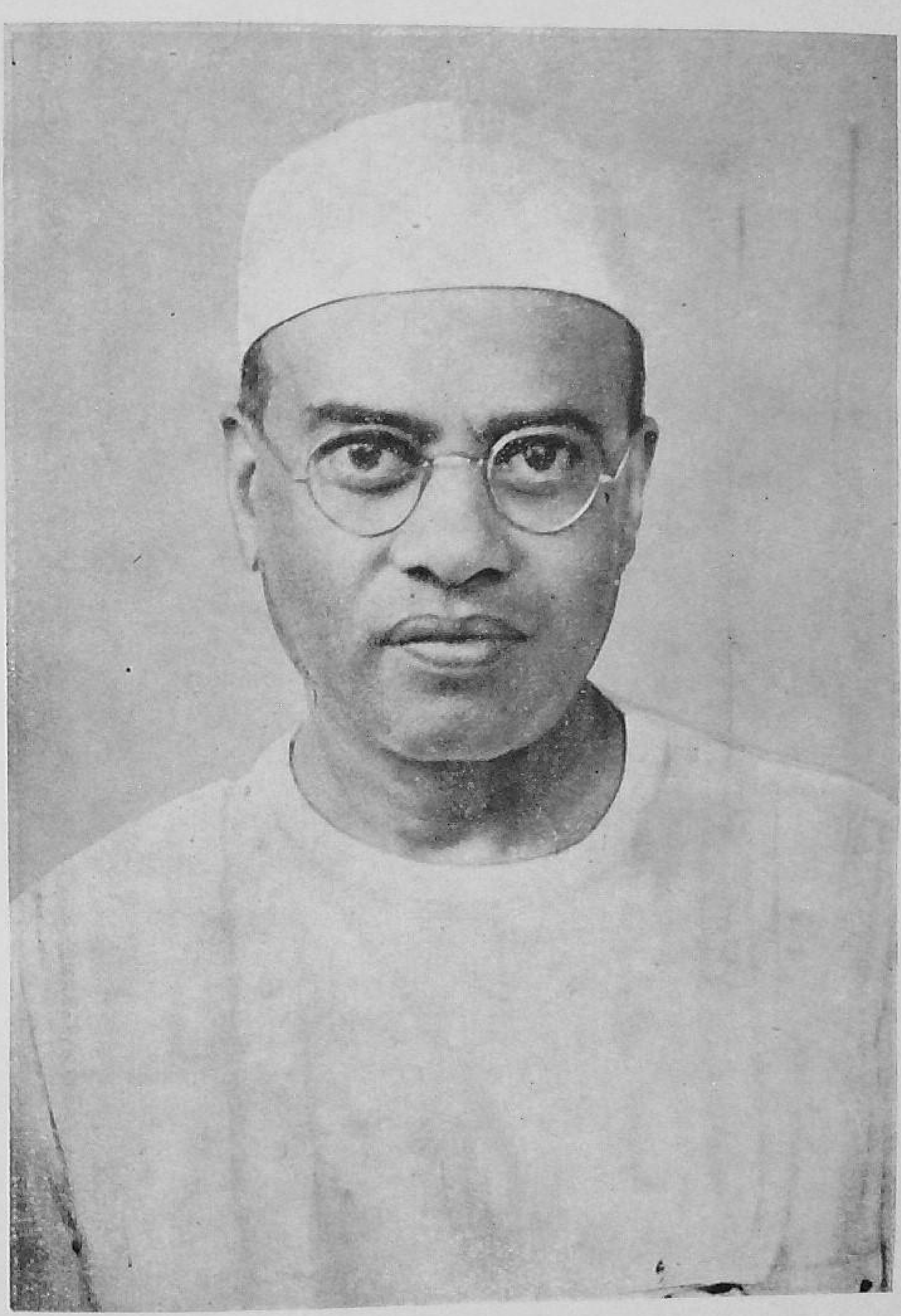
Kumarappa brothers
in Maganvadi



At the opening function of the Gram Udyog Mandir
Gadhada (Saurashtra)
With the Maharaja and Maharani of Bhavnagar



Master and disciple



The Penetrating eyes and disarming smile

PART THREE

CREATIVE REVOLUTION

INTRODUCTION

G. RAMACHANDRAN

The Constructive Programme which Gandhiji gave to the people of India might aptly be studied as a great Creative Revolution. While it is true that it was Gandhiji who took up the programme and gave it shape and momentum, it would be wrong to think that the programme itself came from Gandhiji. The Constructive Programme came out of the historic need in India at a crisis in the life of the people of India. The Constructive Programme has its roots deep in the basic facts of India of some centuries and its branches reach out to many of the basic needs of India. To use a popular Marxist expression, the Constructive Programme was and is part of the 'historic process' in India. The facts that cried out for such a programme were there in the life of the millions of our people in the villages, constituting nearly 80% of the population, and the needs which had to be met were also there equally urgent and hard-pressing. Even before Gandhiji came on the scene, the challenge of these facts and the bitter cry of these needs had come up out of the heart of the history of India and had occasionally been heard and understood by some one or other. The Swadeshi Movement, which came in the

wake of the Bengal Partition under Lord Curzon, was one clear response. The Home Rule Movement of Tilak and Beasant, which tried to take the freedom movement into the rural areas, was another. The broken and shattered life of the people under foreign exploitation needed, not some distant remedies but immediate correctives there and then. Poverty, ignorance, ill-health and death had to be fought with such weapons only as were already available. The only weapons for the good fight which were then available to overflowing, were the heads and hands of the people. These had to be pressed into service then and there for great creative purposes, to repair and remould the life of the people which lay broken and shattered in the dust. Gandhiji came in the fulness of time to embody in himself these imperative and vast urges, which came from the depths of life and history in India. That he was able to absorb these revolutionary urges and give them shape and a mighty moral momentum, was the unique greatness of this man of dynamic personality and character. It was thus that he became in himself the 'historic process' in India. It was thus that he gave shape to and developed the Khadi and Village Industries' movements, the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, the Hindustani Prachar Sabha and the Go Seva Sangh. These are all nation-wide organizations closely inter-related, rising from the same basic facts and reaching out to the same basic needs of the people. Each one of these movements by itself is a mighty thing and any one who organized and led any one of them would surely have been an immortal in the history of our country. That is why we stand today in wonder and reverence before the life and work of a man who shaped and gave a mighty push to all these movements at the same time and added so much more to all of them than was strictly within their respective spheres of thought and action.

The Constructive Programme is creative and revolutionary at the same time. This is so because it is wholly a programme of non-violence. It is absurd to think that violence and destruction must predominate in any great revolution. In fact in all great revolutions, violence and destruction constitute only a desperate and temporary preliminary interlude, to be followed by periods of intensive creative activity. In the Russian and Chinese revolutions we see the

same phenomenon. In the revolution under Gandhiji even the preliminary interlude is one of non-violence and, therefore, one of creative revolution from start to finish. There is no contradiction between the preliminary interlude and constructive work later. Constructive work that follows a violent revolution is like a mental counter-revolution, in so far as it has to emphasize creation once again as against destruction. In a non-violent revolution power accrues and comes naturally into the hands of those who are in it instead of a violent seizure of power. When Britain and India parted after a long and hard struggle, there was no violent seizure of power but power passed smoothly from British to Indian hands. The Constructive Programme must now, in the wake of political freedom, reach out to a greater fulfilment. That is nothing less than a casteless and classless society in India. It is this fulfilment that has yet to be fully worked out. It is this great task that now awaits all those engaged in the Constructive Programme. Political freedom already appears in its true perspective as merely the first step in the great creative revolution under Gandhiji.

Each one of the movements, a brief account of which is given in the following pages, affected the life of the people throughout India. Even more than the external and material changes was the change in the mental outlook of the people in and through these movements. Khadi made people more Swadeshi-minded than anything else. The Village Industries movement brought forth a new conception of economics, the economics of life and Dharma, as opposed to the economics of money. The Economics of Peace emerged against the background of the economics of conflict and war. People saw the meaning of the economics of self-sufficiency in place of the economics of exploitation. Finally, the economics of decentralization challenged the economics of capitalism and communism. The Harijan Sevak Sangh movement struck at the root of a fatal superstition in the religious and social life of the people and showed the way out for the peaceful liberation of sixty million so-called untouchables. The Hindustani Talimi Sangh has started through Basic Education a revolution in education in India which, when it rises to full tide, will change the landscape beyond recognition. In the Hindustani Prachar movement we have the challenge for a common language in

a vast country, with many highly developed languages, without which there can be no new nationhood. Through the Go Seva Sangh we have a programme for vitalizing agriculture and animal husbandry. In the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust we have the assurance of a final fulfilment of the Gandhian revolution in and through a growing army of trained women workers, to whom non-violence will be the law of life. Through all these movements we see the whole life of a people awakening from a long slumber and marching forward to a new and shining destiny. Their significance is, therefore, neither parochial nor temporary. They have a message for the whole world. That message is undoubtedly that there is nothing impossible in the way of the good and rich life for a people who are willing to cleanse their hearts and take faithful hold of the staff of non-violence in remoulding their life and character. To the world at the present time, facing almost total annihilation before the terror and peril of the atom bomb, Gandhiji has delivered the invincible message of Non-violence and Love in action through the Constructive Programme. It is not an inflexible programme, but a supremely illustrative one. In that characteristic is its potency and universality.

I

THE KHADI MOVEMENT

SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

WHY THE CHARKHA?

The Charkha we have today is a great boon that Gandhiji has left with us. It appears that the first glimpse of the power of the spinning wheel came to Gandhiji in a flash, as though by magic. Referring to this, Gandhiji has written, "It was in London in 1908 that I discovered the wheel. I had gone there leading a deputation from South Africa. It was then that I came into close touch with many earnest Indian students and others. We had many long conversations about the condition of India, and I saw, as in a flash, that without the spinning wheel, there was no Swaraj. I knew at once that everyone had to spin. But I did not then know the distinction between the loom and the wheel, and in *Hind Swaraj*, used the word loom to mean the wheel." Whatever may be our feelings about the Charkha today, if we are to be grateful for the part that it has played during the last thirty years of our struggle for freedom, we will certainly have to treat it with the greatest reverence.

There is a mistaken belief that the Charkha is against all machinery. Gandhiji himself has often tried to correct this mistaken impression and said, "How can I be against all machinery when I know that even this body is a most delicate piece of machinery ? The spinning wheel itself is a machine. What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call 'labour-saving machinery'. Men go on saving labour, till thousands are without work and thrown out on the streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind, but for all. I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. The supreme consideration is man. The machine should not tend to make the limbs of man atrophied..... I would make intelligent exceptions."

The roots of the Charkha are in the concept of Swadeshi. For, as Gandhiji has written, "Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and the service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Swadeshi is the law of laws enjoined by the present age. Spiritual laws, like nature's laws, need no enacting; they are self-acting. But through ignorance or other causes man often neglects or disobeys them. The law of Swadeshi is ingrained in the basic nature of man, but it has today sunk into oblivion." And again, "'What is the kind of service,' I asked myself, 'that the teeming millions of India most need at the present time, that can be easily understood and appreciated by all, that is easy to perform and will at the same time enable the millions of our semi-starved countrymen to live?', and the reply came that it is the universalization of Khadi or the spinning wheel alone that can fulfil these conditions. I want to claim that the message of the spinning wheel and Khadi is a supremely spiritual message, and since it is a supremely spiritual message, it is also full of tremendous economic and political consequences for this country. For, the principles of religion to be worth anything have to be capable of being applied in the realm of economics, and economics to be worth anything must incorporate the dictates of religion and the human spirit. Therefore, in this scheme, where economics is fully influenced by religion, there is no room left for the exploiter."

As early as 1924, Gandhiji had claimed the following merits for hand-spinning :—

1. It could supply the readiest occupation to those who had leisure and were in need of a few coppers.
2. It was known to many.
3. It was easily learnt.
4. The outlay of capital that it required was practically nil.
5. The wheel could be easily and cheaply made.
6. It afforded immediate relief in times of famine and scarcity.
7. It distributed crores of rupees to the deserving poor.
8. Any small increase in its use and appeal meant so much of immediate gain to the people.
9. It was a very powerful medium through which people could be induced to resort to co-operative effort.
10. It filled the villager with new hope for a new life. It could fill millions of hungry mouths. It alone could bring us in touch and in tune with the villager.
11. It is not poverty that matters so much as idleness. Idleness is the root cause of all evil. For millions of people, the winter of despair could be turned into the sunshine of hope, only through the life-giving charkha.

Whenever there is any talk about cottage industries and village industries, many people present a formidable list of such industries and say that if we take to these the poverty and unemployment in villages will vanish. In most cases, there is an attempt to eliminate spinning or to make just a passing reference to it. Referring to this attitude, Gandhiji has written, "From the point of view of enumeration, such a list may seem good enough. But it does not solve the problem which needs a speedy solution. For the common man, as well as the village worker, a list of handicrafts that can adorn a museum can only be bewildering. What they need is a universal industry. Spinning is the only industry that can claim to be so universal. This does not mean that other industries do not matter or that they are useless. Indeed, looking at it from the point of view of the individual, any other industry would be more

remunerative than spinning. But how many can engage in these It is not enough to say that hand-spinning is one of the industries that deserve to be revived. If we are to resuscitate the village home, we will have to insist that attention should be concentrated on spinning, which is the central industry of the Indian village."

Today every one in the country seems to be agreed that the hand-loom should have an important place in the structure of our textile industry, though no adequate arrangement has yet been made for its protection or growth. Though the necessity of keeping the looms plying has been felt and accepted, hand-spinning has not been considered essential. Referring to this anomaly Gandhiji has written, "In the first instance, hand-weaving is not a practical proposition as a supplementary industry, because it is not easy to teach, it has never been universal in India, it requires several hands to work and it cannot be done at all times. If, therefore, hand-weaving were to become a supplementary industry on a large scale, it would be solely dependent on mills for its supply of yarn. And the mills would not only squeeze the last pie out of the weaver for the yarn they supply, but also wait for an opportunity to strangle the hand-loom. On the other hand, hand-spinning and hand-weaving are mutually complementary. The economy of the village demands that the weaver should receive his yarn, not from the middle-men, but from his co-worker, the farmer. I am not against the hand-loom. It is a great cottage industry that fully deserves to thrive. It will thrive automatically if the spinning wheel succeeds, and die if the wheel fails." Gandhiji has often told the weaver, "Indeed it is necessary for the very existence of the mills that they should try to snatch this trade too from your hands. What has befallen hand-spinning will most certainly befall hand-weaving too, if you do not wake up betimes".

Gandhiji has very often referred to the central and unique place that the charkha occupies among the industries of the village, and said, "Khadi is the sun of the village solar system. The planets are the various industries which can support Khadi in return for the heat and the sustenance they derive from it. Without it the other industries cannot grow. But during my last tour I discovered that without the revival of other industries, khadi too could not make much further progress".

It is often argued that the charkha cannot make a man self-sufficient in clothing unless much time is spent on spinning, and further, that if the textile industry was organized through the mills it would save much labour for millions of people and give them more leisure for intellectual pursuits. In reply to this argument Gandhiji has said, "Leisure is good and necessary up to a point. God created man to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, and I dread the prospect of our being able to produce all that we want, including our food stuffs, out of a conjurer's hat".

To the question, "Is Khadi economically sound ?", Gandhiji has replied, "If what is meant by the question is whether Khadi can compete in price with the cloth manufactured by Indian or foreign mills, the answer must be an emphatic 'No'. But this negative answer will have to be given about almost everything produced by man-power as against articles produced with the help of labour-saving machinery. The answer would have to be negative even in the case of goods manufactured in Indian factories. Cloth, iron and sugar produced in factories do require state aid in some form or other to withstand foreign competition. I will say, therefore, that it is wrong to put the question in this way at all. In the open market, a more organized industry will always be able to drive out a less organized industry, especially when the former is assisted by bounties and can command unlimited capital and can, therefore, afford to sell its produce even at a temporary loss. Such has been the tragic fate of many enterprises in this country. When I make all these admissions, what do I mean by saying that Khadi is the only true economic proposition ? Let me then state my position more clearly: Khadi is the only true economic proposition for the millions of villagers in our country, until the day, if ever such a day comes, on which we light upon a better plan that will ensure for every able-bodied adult, who is above 16 years of age, in every village of our country, whether he is at home, in the field or in the factory, work and adequate wages, or till cities that can provide villagers with all the necessary comforts and amenities that a well-regulated life demands are built up in sufficient numbers to take the place of the villages of our country. I had to state the proposition in this full form only to show that Khadi must hold the key for a pretty long time to come; at least for such time as we can clearly see ahead."

Gandhiji never looked upon Khadi as mere cloth. He has always been emphasizing the spirit behind Khadi. In 1927, he wrote, "The 'Khadi spirit' demands that we know the significance and the meaning of wearing Khadi. Every morning when we put on our Khadi garments, we should remember that we are doing so in the name of Daridranarayan and for the sake of the starving millions of India. If we have this 'Khadi spirit' in us we would surround ourselves with simplicity in every walk of life. The 'Khadi spirit' signifies inexhaustible patience, unflinching faith in truth and non-violence. It means fellow-feeling and identification with the poorest and lowliest human beings on the earth. Those who are working for the spread of Khadi should possess this spirit of penance *tapascharya*. Every minute of my life, I am fully conscious of the fact that Khadi is bound to stink in the nostrils of our countrymen if those who have consecrated their lives to the work of Khadi do not ceaselessly strive for purity of life".

When India became independent and the question was raised as to whether the insistence on wearing Khadi and spinning was still to continue, Gandhiji said in November 1947, "This friend forgets that independence did not mean just the removal of the foreign yoke. That it was necessary to remove this yoke first for acquiring independence is another matter. But Khadi signifies a life which is built up on the corner-stone of non-violence. This was the meaning of Khadi before independence, and this is the meaning of Khadi even today. If we have to achieve the kind of non-violent independence that our villagers will understand and feel enthused about, I have no doubt in my mind that spinning and the wearing of Khadi are even more necessary today than ever before. They alone can bring the kingdom of Heaven or Ramraj." We were trying through Khadi to free man from the slavery to which machinery driven by steam and electricity had reduced him, to make him master of the machine, to establish equality in the place of the enormous inequalities that today divide the rich from the poor, the high from the low and the man from the woman, and to see that labour was freed from the yoke of capital, so that capital could no longer live by exploiting labour and yet arrogate undue prestige to itself. If, therefore, what we did in India during the last thirty years was not wrong, we should now carry on the work of

Khadi and all its activities with a much greater understanding of the implications of the spinning wheel.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHARKHA

Gandhiji returned to India from South Africa on the 9th of January, 1915. Soon afterwards, he opened an Ashram near Ahmedabad, and in 1916, set up some handlooms there for weaving cloth. At that time mill-yarn was used for weaving. It was soon realized that it was undesirable to depend on others for the supply of yarn. With great difficulty, the Charkha was hit upon. The slivers used in the beginning were from the mills, but they were replaced by hand-made slivers. All this was done with the thought of Swadeshi. Some forty to fifty years prior to the experiment in Ahmedabad, the Swadeshi movement had been started in Maharashtra, and later in the wake of the awakening created by the partition of Bengal it had spread to Bengal and other areas. At that time, as far as Swadeshi in cloth was concerned, the insistence was on mill-made or hand-woven cloth that was made in India and not in foreign lands. And though most of the finer mill or handloom products made in India were woven with foreign yarn, and though 75% of the material used in the fabric was foreign, the article was still considered to be Swadeshi. Gandhiji drew the attention of the country to this defect in the concept of Swadeshi and greatly helped in creating a clearer and purer understanding of the meaning of Swadeshi. Swadeshi, therefore came to mean, as far as cloth was concerned, fabrics woven by handlooms out of hand-spun yarn. In the Amritsar session of the Congress, held in December 1919, it was for the first time accepted that hand-spinning and hand-weaving were to be propagated as the true tests of Swadeshi in cloth. This was of course under Gandhiji's inspiration. In the special session of the Congress held in September 1920, just before the Non-Co-operation Movement was launched, the Congress adopted a programme which was calculated to revive hand-spinning in every house in the country. After that, in subsequent sessions of the Congress, resolutions were passed to reiterate the significance of Khadi and hand-spinning. The session of the A. I. C. C. which met at Vijayawada on the 1st of April 1921, decided to campaign for the introduction of 20 lakhs of Charkhas in the country. Thereafter, with a view to carrying on the campaign

of Civil Disobedience on a wide scale, self-sufficiency in cloth and the weaving of Khadi were made compulsory in selected areas. At that time, about Rs. 60 crores worth of foreign cloth was being imported into this country. There was no prospect of the indigenous mills being able to produce all the cloth required by the country in the near future. Therefore it was decided to fill up this void through hand-spinning. The aim of the country was to get Swaraj. The idea behind getting such enormous quantities of cloth made out of hand-spun yarn was to make crores of men spin. It was thus a revolutionary idea. A revolution was necessary for obtaining Swaraj, and it was hoped that a mental revolution would be brought about by the cult of Swadeshi and this mental revolution would, in turn, facilitate the progress of a political revolution. If a country could save 60 crores of rupees and distribute it to millions of spinners and weavers working in their homes, it would certainly have generated such a tremendous capacity for co-operative industrial effort that it would no longer have found it difficult to take up any programme for the all-round advancement of the nation.

But hand-spinning and weaving had to face many obstacles. Yet, thanks to the tireless efforts of many faithful workers, Khadi began to take deep roots in the soil. The Non-Co-operation Movement gave it a sudden fillip. In April 1921, the tri-colour with the emblem of the Charkha on it, was first mooted, and it was soon accepted by the Congress as the national flag. The Khadi mentality got a further impetus when it was decided that the national flag was not only to have the Charkha on it, but also to be made of Khadi cloth. In 1947 the Government of India replaced the Charkha on the tri-colour flag with the Ashoka Chakra. The reason given for this change was that it was not convenient to imprint the Charkha on the flag and the Chakra, that has been retained, is part of a Charkha. Moreover, since there was no legal restriction which laid it down that the flags were to be made only from Khadi cloth, the national flag began to be made in mill cloth as well. Now the Government is again thinking of insisting that flags should be made only in Khadi cloth. But in spite of all this, it does look clear that with the passing of time, the relation between the flag and the Charkha is becoming more and more remote.

In the beginning, when the production of Khadi began, great efforts had to be made—some times even hawking had to be resorted to— to dispose of whatever Khadi was produced. Great leaders, including many of our present-day Ministers in the States and at the Centre, had to carry Khadi on their backs like coolies for hawking. Many women too undertook this work willingly and with great enthusiasm. Often, it came to be regarded as an integral part of the programme of Civil Disobedience itself. Many eminent persons—both men and women—were arrested by the Government while hawking Khadi and were sent to prison. Nearly 15 months after the Civil Disobedience Movement had been started, when the Congress met at Ahmedabad in 1921, the whole Pandal was decorated with Khadi and the cost of the cloth used for this decoration was estimated to have cost 3½ lakhs of rupees. The cloth section of the exhibition that was held along with this session of the Congress, was reserved exclusively for Khadi. These facts can certainly give some idea of the progress that Khadi had achieved within the short period that led upto 1921.

BIRTH OF THE CHARKHA SANGH

In the beginning, the Congress Working Committee carried on the production and sale of Khadi under its own direct supervision. A start was made in July 1921, with an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs, and by the end of 1923, the Congress had about Rs. 23 lakhs locked up in the work of Khadi.

The work of Khadi had received a real good start when the Congress launched its programme of introducing 20 lakhs of Charkhas in the villages of our country. Some other institutions and individuals too caught the enthusiasm and plunged into the work. In 1922, the Congress Working Committee established a Khadi Department to carry on the work of Khadi, under its direct supervision. This lead was taken up by some of the Provinces. Some of them set up Provincial Khadi Departments, and some others set up Provincial Khadi Boards. In December 1923, the Congress decided to set up an All India Khadi Board. As a result of the efforts of this Board, Provincial Khadi Boards were soon formed in all the Provinces, and these Boards started working under the supervision of the All India

Board. The members of the Provincial Boards were appointed by the respective Provincial Congress Committees, and these Boards had their own Presidents and Secretaries. This meant that the Provincial Boards were ultimately responsible to the Provincial Congress Committees, and this created another problem. There were many questions on which there were sharp differences of opinion among the members of the Provincial Congress Committees. The future political set-up of the country itself was one such major question that was being hotly debated in every Provincial Congress Committee. The differences of opinion on this question were so sharp that several parties sprang up inside these Committees, and in as much as Khadi work was being carried on under these Committees, these differences of opinion inside the Committees, were bound to affect Khadi work as well. In some places, funds meant for Khadi work began to be utilized for political purposes, and there was real danger of Khadi work receiving a hard set-back. In September 1925, therefore, the All India Congress Committee decided to form an independent All India Spinners' Association, which though remaining an integral part of the Congress, would function with complete autonomy. The newly formed Association was also authorized to take over the assets and funds of the various Khadi Boards and to utilize them for the furtherance of its objects.

DEVELOPMENT OF KHADI

The Charkha is a symbol of many things. It came to us as the symbol of our Swadeshi Dharma, inspired us and acted as our chief weapon in the boycott of foreign cloth, and gradually became the symbol of the hopes of the unemployed. From the very beginning, it was also taken to be a symbol of the desire to achieve self-sufficiency in the essential needs of the village. Thus it came to stand for village industries as well. It became the symbol of a practical attempt to establish the weight of over-riding moral considerations in economic activity. The lovers of Khadi, therefore, began to look upon the Charkha as the symbol of Truth and Non-violence. All these merits of the Charkha were known to Gandhiji right from the beginning. But he made his views clearer and laid greater emphasis

on different aspects of the Charkha's greatness at different times. The Charkha Sangh too, has been stressing its different aspects at different times. From the point of view of the special emphasis laid by the Charkha Sangh on the different aspects of the Charkha's potentialities, the work of the Charkha Sangh can be divided into three periods. In each one of these periods, one or two aspects were chosen for special emphasis though the general attention to other aspects was maintained unimpaired throughout. Upto 1933, Khadi work was more or less of a commercial nature, affording relief to the poor. Then came the second period which extended upto 1943. During this period, the idea of paying living wages was introduced into the work, and this initiated a series of experiments in non-violent economic activity. After 1944, the third phase can be said to have started, a phase in which the emphasis is on the Charkha as the symbol of Truth and Non-violence.

Upto 1933, Khadi work had two important aspects—the production of Khadi for sale and the production of Khadi with a view to achieving self-sufficiency in clothing. There was individual as well as collective effort in these directions. Collective efforts were usually made in select and compact areas. Compact areas were chosen, and attempts were made to make the inhabitants of these areas regular and habitual Khadi-wearers. After the long and continued effort of several years, a measure of success was achieved in certain of these areas. But when these intense campaigns were stopped, even this measure of self-sufficiency began to dwindle. On the other hand, there was phenomenal progress in the case of Khadi produced for sale. Its main purpose was to afford relief to the poor villagers. The nature of the work in this sector was to get yarn spun and woven on wages and to sell the cloth so made. Thus, the claim of Khadi that it could afford relief to the poor, if only they would utilize their spare hours, was proved to be true. t was also found that in areas where spinning had not died out, it was very useful during famines. Side by side with the increase in the quantity of the Khadi produced, there was also a remarkable improvement in the quality of Khadi. During these ten years, such fine Khadi had begun to be produced as could not have been conceived

of in 1921, when Khadi meant coarse and badly woven cloth. The count of the yarn, as well as its strength and uniformity improved. Weaving too became quite close and exquisite. Beautifully dyed and printed fabrics began to be produced to cater to varying tastes. Thus Khadi found its feet. Khadi Bhandars and agencies came to be set up in many places for selling Khadi, and Khadi became available at reasonable prices. The implements too were improved, and the entire work of Khadi came to be organized on sound commercial lines. In 1933, one crore square yards of Khadi was produced by the agencies of the Sangh alone. In order that it may stand the competition of mill-made cloth, every effort was made to make it as cheap as possible. Though even coarse Khadi cost about one rupee per square yard in the beginning, even good Khadi came down to as much as 4 annas 6 pies per yard in 1933.

MORAL ASPECTS OF KHADI

In 1934, Gandhiji's attention was drawn to the fact that the purchasers of Khadi in the towns were becoming the centre of the Khadi-production programme, and that attempts were being made to provide as much Khadi as was required by these in the designs and qualities they wanted, and at as cheap prices as possible. Prices were being cut down to enable customers to purchase more and more of Khadi. But the aim of the Charkha Sangh was not only to provide relief for the poor and unemployed villagers by giving them employment, but also to attract the patriotic interest of the townspeople to constructive work and to make them realize their responsibility for promoting the welfare of the villages, even by lessening their comforts and luxuries if necessary. This meant that the Sangh could not remain content with offering a little relief to the poor and selling a few yards of Khadi. In fact, the main objective of the Sangh should have been to raise the moral stature of our people by making them self-sufficient in clothing. Gandhiji, therefore, inspired the Charkha Sangh to concentrate on this aspect of the work. He succeeded in changing the attitude of the Charkha Sangh and in making the Khadi worker realize that his duty was to enter the lives of the villagers, understand their problems and help in

their solution. In 1935, the question of a living wage was brought to the fore. Meanwhile, the zeal for making Khadi as cheap as possible had caused a natural tendency to get work done for as low a wage as possible. During the days of economic depression and unemployment, even very efficient labourers were often willing to work for such low wages. A spinner, who worked for eight hours in the day, could get only 3 to 4 pice, if his yarn was coarse, 4 to 5 pice, if his yarn was of medium counts and a little more if it was of finer counts. When Gandhiji came to notice the figures of the wages paid to the spinner, he became restless. He realized at once, that the worker was being paid such low wages only to enable Khadi to withstand the competition of mill-made cloth and to provide the greatest possible convenience to the consumer. It is true that all transactions in the world are taking place on the basis of the rules of competitive economy. But does that make such acts moral ? Why should an organization like the Charkha Sangh, which was formed with the sole object of serving the poor, follow a path that was sure to lead to the exploitation of the poor ? He was, therefore, of opinion that wages for spinning should (at that time) be paid at the rate of one anna per hour, so that, taking it for granted that there were two able-bodied persons in a family, their earnings should suffice to keep the family going. This proposition was of course correct in principle; but when it was difficult to be sure of a market even for Khadi that needed only 3 to 4 pice as spinning wages, it could easily be seen that Khadi that paid 8 annas as spinning wages would be so costly that it would have beeen almost impossible to carry on Khadi work. The sales would have gone down production would have had to be progressively curtailed, and the relief to the poor would, therefore, have been nominal. Khadi workers did not, therefore, dare to raise the spinning wages to one anna per hour. But the existing wages were gradually raised to three annas, and they got stuck up there. The Maharashtra branch took courage in both its hands, and went up to six annas; but it too had to retrace its steps and go back to 3-4 annas. When prices in the country began to rise, the spinning wage too began to go up, and today, it has come to be 8-12 annas for an efficient labourer. Since these wages were

only for the efficient labourer, the responsibility for increasing the efficiency of the artisans became very urgent, and the Charkha Sangh tried to discharge this responsibility in various ways. It should be remembered, however, that though the spinners were willing to work for lower wages, the Charkha Sangh increased the wages as a matter of principle. The spinners were willing to spin even in their leisure hours on lower wages because they realized that in the absence of any other employment, whatever they could earn through spinning was an asset to them. This was perhaps the first instance in the whole world of an employer, of his own accord, increasing the wages of his employees, even when they were willing to work on lower wages, and that too, on such an extensive scale. The Charkha Sangh undertook to do this because it wanted to stand by a moral principle. But in trying to carry out this reform, it had to face the difficult problem of marketing and selling goods manufactured with an increased cost of production; for, the wages at which lakhs of spinners were employed had been virtually trebled.

Nor was this all. The Sangh had to see that the spinners made proper use of their increased earnings. With this end in view, the workers of the Sangh began to get closer to the wage-earners, to guide them about their household affairs and in some cases, even to pay wages in kind, in the shape of useful articles rather than in cash. Attempts were made to wean the wage-earners from evil practices, such as drinking, smoking and opium eating. At some places, the Charkha Sangh formed Panchayats of the wage-earners and tried to fight evil practices and improve their ways of life through these Panchayats. The branches of the Sangh, on their own initiative, took up many other programmes for the welfare of the labourers. Cheap grain-shops were opened and Ghanis that could provide fresh and pure oil were started. Propaganda for using unpolished rice was carried on at some places. Shops were opened to sell the products of village-industries, and efforts were made to educate the workers on the need for a balanced diet and the way in which they could improve their diet. Wells and drains were dug, Ayurvedic and Homeopathic medicines were distributed, and almost every branch of the Sangh maintained a dispensary. Primary Schools and

craft schools were run at many places. Reading Rooms were opened and literacy and adult-education work was carried on. At two centres, special schemes for the redemption of old debts were taken up. Besides all this, it can be said that every branch of the Sangh carried on propaganda for the removal of untouchability.

The various programmes referred to above were taken up from 1930, and were carried on with increasing success till the Reorientation of the Charkha Sangh in 1945. Not that all these items were worked out on a very large scale; nor that all of them were taken up by all the branches. Each branch took up one or more of the items and worked them out till the entire policy of the Sangh underwent a change with the reorientation towards Samagra Gram Seva.

The immediate effect of increasing the wages, however, was that the production of Khadi had to be curtailed. But soon afterwards, when the Congress came to power in the Provinces, Khadi received a new fillip. Moreover, the World War had broken out by then, and mill-made cloth was becoming scarce. This too helped to increase the demand for Khadi. From the point of view of production, the year 1941-42 was, therefore, a peak year. During this year (1-7-41 to 30-6-42), the Charkha Sangh and its certified centres produced 1,60,00,000 sq. yards of Khadi, worth about Rs. 91,00,000/-. Apart from this, Khadi was being produced by uncertified centres as well as by workers who were seeking to achieve self-sufficiency in clothing.

The Charkha Sangh, at this time, was carrying on its work in 15,000 villages with the help of 3,25,000 spinners, 25,000 weavers and 5,000 other artisans. This included, community-wise, 24,000 Harijans, 1,87,000 other Hindus, 74,000 Muslims and 10,000 others. The exact number of workers on the staff of the Charkha Sangh, in the various branches, was 3,500.

We must here refer to a matter of great significance. The market-price of mill-cloth had shot up due to the war. The cost of production had increased, and profiteering and black-marketing were the order of the day. The old stock available with the Charkha Sangh was of course cheaper, as it had been produced before the cost of production increased. But even so, no one would have found

fault with the Charkha Sangh if they had raised the price of Khadi to keep pace with the increasing cost of production. Yet, for the entire period of 18 months, for which the old stock lasted, there was no increase in prices. The price at which the Sangh was selling its woollen goods was 20% lower than the prevailing market-rate. The result of all this was that there was a rush for Khadi; for, even those who were not habitual wearers of Khadi wanted to buy it since it was cheap. The Bhandars were, therefore, forced to take recourse to some form of rationing.

POLITICAL SUPPRESSION

In 1942, the Charkha Sangh was preparing to take long strides. But the ruthless repression that the Government launched to quell the 'Quit India' Movement, affected the Charkha Sangh very badly. The Secretary of the Sangh was arrested in September. The Assistant Secretary too was rounded up a little later. This was followed by the arrest of 11 of the 14 Trustees of the Sangh and many of the Secretaries of the Provincial Branches. With these arrests, the work of the Sangh practically came to a standstill. Though no branch of the Sangh escaped the wrath of the Government, the Tamilnad, Andhra and Kerala branches suffered the least. The Government banned all the activities of the Bihar Branch. Its provincial office, as well as many of its Bhandars and Production centres, were sealed and confiscated. Some Bhandars were burnt or gutted. Of the 73 production centres, only 27 survived. It was almost the same case with the Utkal Branch too. Much of the work of the Bengal Branch stopped. The Government had made no arrangement to protect stock and other property in the confiscated centres, and much of the property was either stolen or damaged. Rajasthan, Gujrat and Karnatak more or less shared the same fate. In U. P., at one time, all the work of the Shri Gandhi Ashram, Meerut, came to a stand-still. The Government took custody of some of its centres. Some others were looted. The work had to be drastically curtailed, and nearly ¾ of the workers had to be dispensed with. In Maharashtra too, the Government searched and confiscated many of the centres. The little work that was being done in Assam was completely destroyed. It was only from July 1944, that the workers began to be released. Gandhiji reached Sevagram in August 1944.

REORIENTATION OF THE CHARKHA SANGH

While in jail, Gandhiji was thinking seriously about the future of Khadi and the other items of the Constructive Programme. Having seen all that had followed in the wake of the 1942 Movement, he had realized that the Government, if it willed, could throw the entire machinery of the Charkha Sangh (as it stood then) out of gear and destroy Khadi under the chariot-wheel of its repression. He felt, therefore, that instead of depending on organizations that could be thrown out of gear, the Charkha should find its own place in every home, so that even if the Government destroyed the organization, the music of the Charkha could never be silenced. He also felt, instead of being looked upon as just a source of additional income, the Charkha should be looked upon and plied with the full understanding that it was the symbol of self-sufficiency in clothing. Nor was this all. He found that the work of Khadi, Village Industries, Nai Talim, etc., was being carried on in an unrelated manner, and that Agriculture was receiving no attention at all. But work in villages could not be divided into such fine water-tight compartments. The life of the village was an integrated whole, and so, whatever work was to be done in villages was to be done with the idea of Samagra Gram Seva. The worker may have been deputed by any one of the Sanghs, but he should have a perspective of the 'whole', and be concerned with every department of the life of the village. Khadi work too had to be carried on with this new perspective.

With these ideas in view, the work of the Charkha Sangh was reoriented, and Gandhiji stated the rationale of the reorientation in his own inimitable style:

"Spin, knowing the implications of spinning. Let those who spin wear Khadi, and let no one who wears Khadi fail to spin.

'Knowing the implications of spinning' means knowing that the Charkha (i. e. spinning) is the symbol of non-violence. Think, and this will be evident to you.

2. Spinning includes picking cotton from the fields, ginning it, tunai, slivering, spinning the count that is desired and doubling the yarn.

M. K. Gandhi."

Sevagram, 28-3-45.

It was natural, therefore, that the main emphasis began to be laid on the idea of self-sufficiency. Arrangements were made on an extensive scale to teach spinning and to train the workers of the Sangh to teach spinning. To ensure that every Khadi wearer did his share of spinning, a rule was laid down that Khadi would be sold only to those who gave $\frac{1}{8}$ the number of hanks required for producing the amount of Khadi bought.

Since the assets of the Charkha Sangh were meant only for Khadi work, they could not be used for the work of Samagra Gram Seva. So the policy of the Sangh has been to encourage the Khadi worker to do as much as he could for the all-round advancement of the village while attending to his Khadi work and ensuring that the funds of the Charkha Sangh were not utilized for any work other than that of Khadi. In addition to this, it was decided that the workers of the Charkha Sangh, who preferred the work of Samagra Gram Seva as also others, who wanted to devote themselves to this new work, would be given a maintenance allowance by the Sangh for a period of five years. The policy of the Sangh, however, has been to select only tried workers for this new experiment. Nearly twenty persons from outside the ranks of the Sangh took advantage of the scheme. In 1951, the Sarva Seva Sangh took over the management of this experiment. The nature of the work done by these Samagra Sevaks differed from place to place. Each of them, in their respective areas, tried to increase self-sufficiency in clothing. Some started spinning schools; some got spinning classes introduced in the schools in their locality. At some places, attempts were made to introduce trench-latrines, to get drains dug and to keep village wells and tanks clean. Some of these workers started Basic Schools and Balwadis. Two of them ran a children's hostel, where children stayed throughout the day and night, but went home for their food. At some places, reading rooms were started to act as centres for adult education. Every one of these workers conducted collective prayer in the evenings, and at these prayer-meetings, a summary of the day's news was read out, and these and the problems of the village were discussed. At two places co-operative shops were started. Village industries like ghani, hand-grinding of flour, paper-making, basket-making, bee-keeping, etc. were started at many places. At some places, they succeeded in establish-

ing village panchayats that worked for the settlement of local disputes. In addition to all this, the workers also tried to remove social evils like untouchability and drunkenness. They also administered aid to the sick and carried on propaganda for nature cure and for other items of the Constructive Programme.

GOVERNMENT AND KHADI

That the British Government was always opposed to Khadi needs no mention. The Congress was supporting Khadi. So, when Congress Ministries were formed in eight Provinces, in 1937, the Charkha Sangh placed before them schemes for supporting the work of Khadi. The Congress Governments agreed to give financial assistance for: (i) manufacturing improved tools and making them available to the artisans, (ii) training workers and artisans in the work of Khadi, (iii) meeting the deficit created by the introduction of living wages and (iv) meeting the expenses incurred in expanding the work of existing centres or starting new centres. The Government of Madras went even further than the Governments of other Provinces in helping the work of Khadi. The Congress Ministries were dissolved in 1939 and, after seven years in the wilderness, returned to power 1946. The year 1947 saw the transfer of power to India.

The readers may well remember what a great movement was carried on, and what sacrifices and difficulties had to be put up with, to boycott foreign cloth. The movement was on for nearly 75 years, and especially in the last 30 years, it was a movement of great momentum. We can say, in retrospect, that on many occasions, we did achieve a measure of success, though it cannot be said that we were fully successful at any time. Even so, the import of foreign cloth had almost stopped during the World War, and Indian mills had begun to produce all the cloth that was necessary for our consumption. Soon after the end of the war, we became free, and our Governments were free to stop the import of foreign cloth. But nothing has been done, and cloth worth crores of rupees is still being imported into our country. Can there be a harder blow for the country, and especially for the lovers of Khadi?

The Congress Ministries were in power in the Provinces and at the Centre. There was acute shortage of cloth in the country. It was a good opportunity for the Governments to push ahead with

the ideal of self-sufficiency. But it became increasingly evident that the Congress Ministries, and even some members of the Congress High Command, no longer had the same faith that they had in Khadi a few years ago. This loss of faith was bound to have repercussions on smaller Congress Committees and the people at large. There was not even the same enthusiasm for rendering such help as was given in earlier years, not to talk of the question of closing down the mills which were the real rivals of the spinning wheel. Referring to this, Gandhiji wrote on the 24th of October, 1947, "Political workers who wear Khadi today wear it out of habit. Today, victory is not that of Khadi, but that of the mills. We have persuaded ourselves to believe that crores of people in our country would have to go naked but for the mills. What can be a greater mistake ? We have enough cotton, enough looms, enough spinning wheels and enough spinning and weaving talent. Yet we seem to have made up our minds that crores of people will not spin or weave to fulfil their own requirements. He who has given place to fear in his heart, feels afraid even where there is no cause for fear".

During the struggle for independence, Khadi had sufficient importance. All Congressmen and leaders were advocating Khadi. It was, therefore, hoped that when the Congress came to power, Khadi would secure the place that Gandhiji had visualized for it. That hope has now been dashed to the ground. It is true that Congress Governments have been and are still rendering some assistance to Khadi work. One or two of them, like the Governments of Bombay and Madras have even made special efforts to popularize spinning and help Khadi. The Government of Bombay has introduced spinning in primary schools. When Shri T. Prakasam was Premier, the Government of Madras created a sensation in the country by declaring, in August 1946, that it would neither sanction the establishment of new textile mills in the Province nor allow the existing mills to increase the number of spindles in them. This policy of the Madras Government was severely criticized and opposed by many mill-owners and capitalists and even by some 'intellectuals' and influential newspapers. Even the Congress Ministry at the Centre was opposed to it. Soon, however, there was a change of Ministry, in Madras; the new Ministry reversed the textile policy of the old Ministry, but permitted the on-going cloth self-sufficiency

programmes in 7 firkas to continue. The Charkha Sangh extended its fullest co-operation to these self-sufficiency projects, though it did warn the Government that the scheme would make no headway unless the sale of mill-cloth was strictly prohibited in the firkas chosen for the experiment. The Premier of Madras agreed to promulgate such a ban. But nothing was done for three years, and at the end of this long period, when the Government of Madras expressed its inability to enforce such a ban, the Charkha Sangh had no option but to withdraw its co-operation.

The Planning Commission appointed by the Government of India is now proposing to give a new fillip to Khadi and village industries. Whatever their scheme may be, they can hope for little success, unless they are prepared to re-organize our economic structure radically and create an atmosphere in which village-economy can thrive.

The Governments of Madras, Punjab, Utkal, Bengal, Assam and Bihar are doing some Khadi work on their own. The Government of Mysore, in particular, has been carrying on work for the last 25 years.

CONGRESS AND KHADI

From the very beginning, Khadi had the support of the Congress. In 1924, the Congress made it compulsory for all its members to wear Khadi at meetings and other functions of the Congress. Gradually, the wearing of Khadi at all times became compulsory, and a rule was introduced in the Constitution to ensure that only habitual wearers of Khadi voted or contested at the elections of the Congress. It was also laid down that only Khadi certified by the Charkha Sangh was to be used by the members of the Congress. In 1924-25, a new rule was introduced, which laid down that every member of the Congress should donate 2,000 yards of hand-spun yarn through the Charkha Sangh. At that time, the number of members who enrolled themselves in this manner was 15,355. For some time the Congress experimented with yarn franchise; but, since it was not very much appreciated, any other manual labour was accepted as an alternative. Soon, however, even these clauses had to be given up, and the subscription of four annas became the only condition for membership. Numbers were very

important to the Congress. There were many among its members, who had no faith in Khadi, but had to do something to put up a show for the sake of discipline. So, there was much slackness in enforcing the Khadi and yarn clauses. Nor did many Congressmen care to discriminate between certified and uncertified Khadi.

It may be appropriate here to add a few words on certified and uncertified Khadi. Hand-spun yarn was much costlier than mill-yarn, and Khadi lovers were buying Khadi, which was dearer, in a spirit of sacrifice. Trading on the noble sentiments of these Khadi lovers, merchants began to manufacture fabrics which looked like Khadi, but contained mill-yarn, and to make money by selling these as Khadi. To check this immoral profiteering and to enable Khadi lovers to distinguish this spurious stuff, the Charkha Sangh decided to certify institutions producing genuine Khadi. These certified institutions rendered yeoman service to the cause of Khadi, by carrying its message to the remotest corners of our country. Uncertified dealers had always been a menace to Khadi. And when the price of Khadi went up with the decison to pay living wages to the spinners and weavers, they made full use of the increased opportunity for profiteering. In spite of the fact that Gandhiji and other leaders condemned them very severely, these self-seekers never gave in. For instance, a few days prior to his Nirvana, on the 5th of January, 1948, Gandhiji wrote about uncertified Khadi, and said, "Certified Khadi alone can be real Khadi. Here the word 'certified' does not express the full meaning. The real meaning of 'certified' is that Khadi for which yarn has been bought on payment of a full wage, which has been woven on payment of a full weaving wage and whose selling price has been fixed, not for profit-making, but in the interest of the people. There is only one institution which can issue such a certificate, and that is the All India Spinners' Association. Therefore, that alone is real Khadi for which the All India Spinners' Association has issued this certificate. All other Khadi is uncertified and is spurious. There must be some fault somewhere in not obtaining the A. I. S. A's certificate. Why should we buy condemned Khadi?".

It has already been stated that after the reorientation of the work of the Charkha Sangh, purchasers had to pay a part of the price of the goods they bought in hand-spun yarn. Many Congressmen

resented this, and used to argue with Gandhiji that since he had made Khadi wearing compulsory for Congressmen, since the Charkha Sangh would not sell Khadi unless a portion of the price was paid in yarn, and since the wearing of uncertified Khadi was taboo, it all boiled down to a sort of compulsion on Congressmen to spin. To this, Gandhiji replied, "That action alone can be compulsion where there is penalty for refusing to do a particular thing. There is some condition or other attached to membership in any institution. It is also no compulsion if subsequently, any change is made in such conditions. The case of uncertified Khadi is similar. The only questions to be considered are whether the change fulfils the object, is in keeping with the principles of Truth and Non-violence, and is actuated by selfish or benevolent motives. The answer to all these questions will show that the change was to fulfil the original object, and the question of compulsion does not arise. We believe that Khadi is only for those who believe that non-violent Swaraj can be established by making Khadi universal. Spinning, even for a little time, by the greatest number of people will be helpful in obtaining Swaraj. We do not, therefore, spin under compulsion, but of our own accord".

But how many would appreciate this trend of reasoning? Even the top-leaders of the Congress were not seeing eye to eye with Gandhiji on this subject. So, when the Congress Constitution was redrafted in 1948, it contained only the word 'Khadi'; the word 'certified' was deleted. This was certainly a blow to genuine Khadi, however indirect and inadvertent the step of the Congress may have been. But since the new Constitution of the Congress made it necessary for its 6 lakhs of effective members to be Khadi-wearers and since the Charkha Sangh wanted to avoid inconvenience to such a large number of Khadi-purchasers, it removed the yarn-clause and allowed certified dealers to sell Khadi without insisting that a portion of the price should be paid in yarn. A little later, the Congress re-introduced the word 'Certified' before 'Khadi', but subsequently, it has been dropped again. In between, the Congress authorized the Provincial Congress Committees, the State Governments and institutions like the Shri Gandhi Ashram

(Meerut), the Bihar Khadi Samiti, etc. to certify Khadi. Readers can well judge how the genuineness of Khadi could be maintained under such an arrangement, when neither the party-politics-ridden P. C. Cs nor the Governments had the means to judge the genuineness of Khadi. Fortunately, no Provincial Congress Committee has so far issued any certificate to persons or institutions, and excepting the Madras Government, no State Government has issued any licence for Khadi work.

It will be useful, here, to cite an interesting example of how Congressmen have been, and are still, running Khadi down. Every effective member of the Congress had to be a habitual Khadi-wearer. So, after the new Congress constitution came into force, when members were being enrolled before the elections to the Congress Committees, many who were not habitual Khadi-wearers enrolled themselves as effective members. In one district in Andhra alone, 4 lakhs of effective members were enrolled. Wherever the words 'habitual Khadi-wearer' had to be interpreted, the General Secretary of the Congress sent round a circular which stated that if a person was wearing Khadi while applying for membership and if he promised to continue to wear Khadi thereafter, he might be considered a 'habitual Khadi-wearer'. The result was that lakhs of persons were enrolled as effective members though it was done in a manner quite contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution. When this irregularity came to the notice of the Congress Working Committee, they had to disqualify all the effective members.

Be that as it may, the Charkha Sangh is a creation of the Congress. The Congress has served the cause of Khadi to a very great extent. Khadi, too, has rendered all possible help to the Congress in the struggle for freedom. Thus, for a long time, the two have been inter-dependent, and the Charkha Sangh, therefore, will ever remain grateful to the Congress.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE PRESENT PROGRAMME OF THE SANGH

Ever since its reorientation, the Charkha Sangh has been concentrating its attention on the progress towards self-sufficiency. It may be remembered that during the Charkha Jayanti of

1947, Gandhiji had given the following message to the country: "One epoch of Khadi has ended. Khadi achieved something for the benefit of the poor. Now we have to demonstrate how the poor can be self-supporting. How Khadi can become the symbol of non-violence is to be proved. That is the real work. Our faith in this has to be demonstrated". Though Gandhiji had begun to dislike the production and sale of Khadi for commercial purposes, and though he and the Charkha Sangh were clear that, under the existing circumstances, if Khadi was to make any real progress, the entire energy of the Sangh had to be concentrated on the effort to achieve self-sufficiency in clothing, the Sangh did not want to divest itself of the responsibility of making genuine Khadi available to those who wanted to wear Khadi, but were unable to spin for themselves. It was, therefore, decided to entrust the commercial side of Khadi work to certified institutions. The Sangh opened a special department for this purpose. Today, with the exception of Tamilnad, it can be said that much of this work has already been passed on to certified institutions.

Though the present atmosphere in the country is not very favourable to constructive work, there are many groups in towns and villages who still have full faith in the Gandhian ideology and want to do some kind of constructive work. There was no point in building up a central organization to guide these groups, because the nature of the constructive work they could do depended almost entirely on local conditions. So, the Charkha Sangh decided to start local organizations for this purpose. These organizations were called 'Katayi Mandals' or spinning clubs, and in the two years during which the work of organizing these Mandals has gone on, 745 full-fledged Mandals have been set up, and 494 more are in the formative stages. Any five persons from different families, who spin regularly and are habitual wearers of Khadi, can constitute themselves into a Katayi Mandal. Every Mandal has to arrange congregational spinning at least once a week, and utilize that opportunity to draw up and carry out a programme of constructive work that the local conditions demand. Though these organizations are called Katayi Mandals, their purpose is to carry on Samagra

Gram Seva, and the word 'Katayi' or spinning is used only to indicate that the ideology of the Mandal is that of the Charkha and also to indicate that if no other form of manual work is possible for its members, they can at least carry on spinning, which is a good symbol of self-help and manual labour. The Charkha Sangh has framed some rules to help such Mandals by making cotton and implements available to them, arranging for training in carding, spinning and weaving, arranging for weaving the yarn produced by the Mandals, guiding them in other matters, auditing their accounts and supervising their general activities. It is hoped that these Mandals will help in creating an atmosphere in which a Sarvodaya order of society can be established.

In all attempts to achieve self-sufficiency, weaving has always remained a tough problem. The Charkha Sangh has, therefore, taken up extensive schemes to train more and more people in weaving ordinary and doubled yarn, to introduce improved hand-looms that can be easily operated in every home, and to organize weaving centres that will undertake to weave the yarn that individual spinners would like to get woven from them. Every attempt is being made to improve the implements for carding, spinning and weaving to obtain greater output in less time. Thanks to the policy of the Government, which promotes the cultivation of long-stapled cotton for the mills, the varieties of cotton used for strong and durable medium counts are fast disappearing. The Charkha Sangh is, therefore, trying to grow such cotton as is useful for hand-spinning and also making special efforts to popularize the growing of tree-cotton so that every house may be assured of a steady supply of good cotton. A new Department has now been created in the Charkha Sangh to look after these projects.

To enable people of the younger generation to understand the ideology of the Charkha (the Gandhian ideology) and to lead a disciplined life of national service, the Charkha Sangh has been conducting camps in different parts of the country. This programme has now gone on for three years, and workers have found a great source of inspiration in these camps. The chief office-bearers of the Sangh, as well as other prominent constructive

workers, attend these camps and enable the campers to take the benefit of their knowledge and experience.

To train Khadi workers and to impart a scientific education in the craft, Khadi Vidyalayas were being run even before the Charkha Sangh came into existence. The first such Vidyalaya was started at the Sabarmati Ashram under the direction of the late Shri Maganlal Gandhi. After that, the Swaraj Ashram at Bardoli, the Satyagrahashram at Wardha, the Khadi Pratishthan at Sodepur and the Vidyapiths in Gujrat, Kashi and Bihar carried on Khadi training work in their respective schools. During the 1930-32 Movement, this kind of training work had practically to be given up. From 1937, the Charkha Sangh has been laying great stress on teaching carding and spinning to its workers. In 1940, the Khadi Education Committee was established, and syllabuses for different courses such as the Katayi Karyakarta, the Khadi Prathama, the Khadi Madhyama, the Khadi Visharad, the Khadi Pravesh and the Saranjam Karyakarta, etc., were drawn up. Practically every Provincial Branch had its own Vidyalaya where these courses were taught and examinations were held. The Khadi Vidyalaya at Sevagram has been, and is, the central school of the Sangh. The Vidyalaya teaches spinning and weaving to primary school teachers deputed by the various State Governments, as well as to the workers of the Charkha Sangh. Nearly 100-125 students pass through this Vidyalaya every year. It cannot be denied that these Vidyalayas have contributed a great deal towards the scientific, technical and commercial progress of Khadi.

WORKERS OF THE CHARKHA SANGH

Khadi has had to cross many hurdles. It is true that its appeal was instinctive and so it could make rapid progress during the days when direct action was on, and political consciousness was very high among the people. But such periods were short and far between. Only Gandhiji could, therefore, have dared to place the programme of the Charkha before the country and challenge the entrenched might of the mills that had left hardly any scope for the Charkha. Even today, it is only the faithful few who can still hope that hand-spinning will hold its own against the mills. In the beginning, there were many difficulties that Khadi workers had to

surmount. Firstly, their knowledge about hand-spinning was practically nil, and they had to learn with very great difficulty the various processes like carding, etc. To many of them, manual labour itself was a new experience. Many, who had taken to Khadi, were so poor that they found it hard to afford to buy Khadi which was dearer than mill-cloth. Khadi was so rough that it was no pleasure to wear it. Women had even greater difficulties in using it. In the beginning, there were no varieties in pattern or texture. Many youngsters, who wanted to take to Khadi, found that they could not do so without incurring the displeasure of their parents. Society too frowned on Khadi. And more than all this, it had to bear the severe wrath of the Government. Nor was it spared by academicians who lost no opportunity to ridicule it.

That Khadi made such remarkable progress in spite of these formidable difficulties, was mainly due to the strength and devotion of its workers. The ability and services of the full-time workers of the Sangh as well as of the numerous voluntary workers outside the Sangh, who worked for Khadi in the different parts of the country, were responsible for what Khadi has been able to achieve.

The work of Khadi was not just getting cloth woven and sold, and in that process, distributing some money to the poor. It meant much more. A Khadi worker had to enter into the lives of the artisans, see that their wages were not squandered but put to proper use, improve their personal and social habits, work for a mental revolution in them, and do all that could be done for their all-round well-being. We wanted to set a noble example for businessmen, by ensuring that the production and sale of Khadi was done in strict conformity with Truth. We wanted to strengthen the spirit of sacrifice in people and to place the Charkha before them as the symbol of Truth and Love. We wanted to rebuild life,—whether at home or in society, in the economic or in the political field,—on the firm foundations of Truth. No doubt, these ideals were very high and difficult to reach; but nevertheless, every effort had to be made. It was equally clear that precepts by themselves would achieve very little. It was only action in conformity with high precepts that could inspire people to co-operate in great and revolutionary efforts. It is better not to frame a balance-sheet of the success of the Charkha Sangh in all these matters. Like the Charkha Sangh,

many other institutions, too, have been working for these ideals. It can, however, be safely said that in whatever has been achieved in this direction, Khadi workers have contributed their full share. For some time, the Charkha Sangh had about 3,000 whole-time workers, who were working even in the remotest corners of the country. These workers came into contact with crores of people, and it can be said that there was no other organization in the country, excepting the Congress, which came into daily contact with such a large number of people, especially in the villages. This itself can give one an idea of the part that the Charkha Sangh could play in refashioning society. The workers of the Sangh were the real life-blood of the Sangh, because it was they who had to carry the message of the Charkha to the people, and there is no doubt that these workers have done much for Khadi by their devotion and sacrifices and by the way in which they have helped to raise the moral standards of the community.

As has been said earlier, the work of Khadi was very hard and trying in the beginning. Workers had often to leave their own homes and Provinces and to go and settle down in remote and inaccessible places. They often found it hard to get places to live in and even to get the kind of food they were accustomed to. They had also to put up with a kind of boycott, sometimes, because they were against untouchability, and the orthodox 'touchables' of the village, therefore, would even go to the extent of denying them medical aid, access to village-wells, etc. These workers had to work on a scanty pittance. Nor could they find solace in the hope of fame; for, they were away from the limelight, buried in the very heart of India. It was only their undying faith in Khadi that inspired them and sustained them.

It is often said that quality and quantity go ill together. The Charkha Sangh seems to have been no exception to this. When the work increased and thousands of workers were needed, the same standards could not be insisted on; nor was it possible in many cases to go into all these matters before a person was recruited. There were many who came to the Sangh inspired by the genuine love of Khadi. There were also many who had no

faith in Khadi, but since they were in need of jobs, thought that one job was as good as any other. Even among these, some, after joining the Sangh, identified themselves with the Sangh and its cause.

One more thing needs to be mentioned here. When the work of Khadi was started, many workers took up the work and dedicated their lives to it in the belief that Khadi alone could lead the country forward. Many of these workers spent as many as 20–25 years in the work. But as they grew older and as their family-responsibilities increased, some of them—not all—began to weaken. So too, with the passage of years, the nature of the work itself had changed. It no longer needed the same degree of *tapascharya* and industry that were needed when it was struggling to rise on its feet. The new phase needed some new kinds of qualities and many of the old workers found it hard to answer the new demands that were being made on them, or to fit into the new pattern of things. Yet, allowing for all these factors that are bound to arise in any growing institution, leaving aside the cases of individuals and speaking of the workers as a group, it has to be admitted that it is certainly a matter of pride for any organization to possess such a large number of sincere, honest and self-less workers. It is difficult to find a parallel in any other institution of the size of the Charkha Sangh.

II

THE UNTOUCHABLES' LIBERATION MOVEMENT

S. R. Venkataraman

A

GANDHIJI'S CHALLENGE

In the whole story of mankind, no social problem was so intimately bound up with, or so vitally related to, the political life of a country as the problem of Untouchability in India, and no statesman or political leader of note had ever staked his life upon a satisfactory solution of such a social problem as Mahatma Gandhi.

When the question of the future political set up in India and the granting of Swaraj to her was being deliberated on in London by British statesmen and Indian leaders at the Round Table Conference in 1931, our leaders had to negotiate many a hurdle, one of them being the hurdle of untouchability. The leaders of the so-called Depressed Classes who attended the Round Table Conference, entered

into a pact known as the Minorities Pact, which provided for separate electorates and reservation of seats for the Depressed Classes. The Prime Minister of England welcomed the Pact. But Mahatma Gandhi, who was attending the Round Table Conference as the sole representative of the Congress, was greatly disturbed over it, in as much as to him it meant the vivisection of the Hindu Community and he characterized the claim advanced on behalf of the untouchables by the Premier as the unkindest cut of all. He declared, addressing the Minorities Committee of the R. T. C.,: "Let this Committee and let the whole world know that to-day there is a body of Hindu reformers who feel that this is a shame not of the Untouchables, but of orthodox Hinduism, and they are, therefore, pledged to remove the blot. We do not want on our register and on our Census 'untouchables' classified as a separate class. I would rather that Hinduism died than that untouchability lived". Gandhiji's intense feeling on this question can be realized when he further observed, "The cause of the 'untouchables' is dear to me as life itself. I will not bargain away their rights for the kingdom of the whole world.........Those who speak of the political rights of the 'untouchables' do not know how the Indian Society is to-day constructed" and concluded by saying that even if he was the only person to resist the thing, (meaning separate electorates and reservation of seats for 'untouchables') he would resist it with his life.

And this was no new interest that he had developed, with political strings attached to it. Questioned as to his right to speak on behalf of the Depressed Classes, during the same visit to England already referred to, he avowed the priority of his dedication to the cause of the Untouchables to any of his other devotions. "I was wedded to the work for the extinction of untouchability", he declared on that occasion, "long before I was wedded to my wife". In fact, he tells us in his autobiography that twice his relations with his wife came almost to the breaking point, over the issue of serving the untouchables; though on both occasions the crisis was averted by the wife conceding his principle of making no distinctions between man and man.

He was a pioneer among Congress leaders in advocating the total abolition of untouchability. Though deeply devoted to his religion, he went to the extent of saying that if he discovered that the scriptures which are known as the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavadgita, the Smritis, etc., clearly showed that they claimed divine authority for untouchability, nothing on earth thereafter, would hold him to Hinduism. The religious significance that he attached to this problem alone explains the fervour of his devotion to the cause and the lengths to which he was prepared to go in eradicating the evil.

When Gandhiji returned to India, he was arrested by the British Government on the 4th of January, 1932, and a ruthless rule of repression followed. From the prison Gandhiji conveyed to Sir Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India, his resolve to fast unto death in case the Government stuck to their decision to create separate electorates for 'untouchables'. The British Cabinet was unyielding and on the 17th of August, 1932, the Premier announced his decision known as the Premier's Communal Award with separate electorates to the 'untouchables'. Gandhiji wrote again from prison, on the 18th of August, 1932, stating that the only way by which he could resist the Premier's Award would be by undertaking "a perpetual fast unto death from food of any kind save water with or without salt and soda," and that he would commence his fast on the 20th of September, 1932.

The Premier wrote to Gandhiji on the 8th of September questioning Gandhiji's bonafides and intentions towards the Depressed Classes! Gandhiji in reply wrote back to the Premier stating that "without arguing let me affirm that for me the matter is one of pure religion. In the establishment of a separate electorate for the Depressed Classes, I sense the injection of a poison that is calculated to destroy Hinduism and do no good whatever to the Depressed Classes."

Fortunately for the country and for Hinduism and the Depressed Classes themselves, leaders of the Depressed classes, like the late Mr. M. C. Rajah, openly condemned the policy of the Government to segregate the Depressed Classes through a system of separate

electorates and appealed to all sections to stand by Gandhiji and save his life. Leaders of public opinion, like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, demanded the immediate release of Gandhiji and hoped that no wise Government would take any risks with the life of one who alone could make any contribution to the communal problem by mutual agreement.

At the suggestion of prominent Hindu leaders like Seth G. D. Birla, Pandit Malaviya, Dr. M. R. Jaykar and Sri Rajaji, the 20th of September was observed all over India as a day of fasting and prayer for the success of Gandhiji's mission. On that day several temples were thrown open all over India and practical service to Harijans was undertaken by caste Hindus in a spirit of humility and service. The tense suspense created by the delay in receiving a reply to Gandhiji's letter from the Premier made several leaders of light and leading in the country to interview Gandhiji in jail to know his views on separate electorates in some more detail. Gandhiji, in all his talks, insisted on heart unity and joint electorates and wanted untouchability to go once for all.

Meanwhile Shri A. V. Thakkar met Dr. Ambedkar, the leader of the Depressed Classes and a signatory to the Minorities Pact at the R. T. C. The learned Doctor was prepared to agree to any alternate and reasonable proposal in spite of the Minorities Pact if one such was suggested to him. This was a silver lining to the cloud.

On the 19th of September the Hindu leaders met at Bombay under the Chairmanship of Pandit Malaviya and they all agreed that Gandhiji's life must be saved and the shame of untouchability removed from Hindu society at the earliest moment. They all signed a manifesto, at the instance of the late Mr. M. C. Rajah, pledging themselves to fight untouchability till it was completely eradicated.

The Hindu Leaders' Conference met again at Bombay on the 20th afternoon when Sir Chunilal Mehta, who had interviewed Gandhiji at Poona, told them that Gandhiji would raise no objection to the reservation of seats on the basis of joint electorates if the Hindu leaders thought that it was necessary.

While the leaders were deliberating at Bombay, Gandhiji entered on his fast at 12 noon on the 20th at Poona, inside the

Yeravada Prison. In a statement that he issued soon after, he said that the "fight against untouchability is a fight against the impure in humanity."

At the Hindu Leaders' Conference held on the same day at Bombay, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru suggested a new formula to which Dr. Ambedkar agreed. The formula was the adoption of a system of primary and secondary election for a limited number of seats. The merit claimed for this proposal was that it maintained the principle of joint electorates and enabled, at the same time, the Depressed Classes to choose their own candidates. While Dr. Ambedkar welcomed the proposal, he demanded more seats than were given to the Depressed Classes under the British Premier's Award.

The scheme was placed before Gandhiji at Poona on the 21st morning. The deputation consisted of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sri Rajaji, Dr. M. R. Jaykar, Seth G. D. Birla and Sri. Rajen Babu. After listening to the scheme, which was propounded by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Gandhiji reacted to it favourably but wanted to meet both Dr. Ambedkar and Mr. Rajah and have a talk with them before saying anything about it. Accordingly Dr. Ambedkar and Dr. Solanki saw Gandhiji, Mr. M. C. Rajah not being available then; and after a great deal of heart to heart, open and frank discussion, Dr. Ambedkar agreed to the joint electorates and the primary election for all the seats.

Following this change for the better in the attitude of Dr. Ambedkar and his followers, Pandit Malaviya cabled to the Premier communicating to him the feelings in the country in favour of joint electorates with reservation of seats for Harijans. Meanwhile the Hindu leaders were busy meeting and considering all the points involved in the scheme agreed to by Dr. Ambedkar. They discussed the number of seats, the basis on which it was to be fixed, the number of candidates to be elected to the panel, representation to the Central Legislature, duration of the system of primary election, duration of reserved seats, distribution of posts, etc. Dr. Ambedkar took a leading part in the discussion and he demanded 197 seats for the Depressed Classes as against the 71 given to them under the British Premier's Award. But the demand made by Dr. Ambedkar was arbitrary. Finally the leaders agreed to allot 148 seats on the basis of the population figures of the Depressed Classes supplied to

them both by Shri A. V. Thakkar and Mr. Bakhale of the Servants of India Society to which Dr. Ambedkar assented.

Dr. Ambedkar's proposal provided a clause that the question of continuing reserved seats was to be decided by a referendum by the Depressed Classes at the end of a further period of fifteen years. Dr. Ambedkar himself admitted that the referendum proposed by him was a "Sword of Damocles", which would compel the caste Hindus to change their behaviour towards the Depressed classes. When Dr. Ambedkar met Gandhiji in jail he asked Gandhiji to bless his proposal for a referendum. There was a frank and full discussion on this subject and those interested in having fuller knowledge of the discussion may turn to the pages of "*The Epic Fast*" by Sri Pyarelal. Suffice it to say that Gandhiji was not in favour of Dr. Ambedkar's proposal for such a referendum. Gandhiji's argument against it was that Dr. Ambedkar should "not deprive Hinduism of a last chance to make a *voluntary* expiation for its sinful past". However Gandhiji agreed to a five year limit. In regard to the referendum, he finally said: "Five years or my life". This news of Gandhiji's reply to the claim and demand for a referendum by Dr. Ambedkar on behalf of the Depressed Classes spread like wild fire and the Depressed Classes leaders, much to the chagrin of Dr. Ambedkar, accepted Gandhiji's proposal for the five year limit for a referendum. Meanwhile, Sri Rajaji, who was known to be able to disentangle many a complicated knot with his keen political sagacity and statesmanship, met Dr. Ambedkar and in the course of his discussion persuaded him to agree to leave the question of the referendum to be decided by mutual adjustment in the future. When this news was conveyed to Gandhiji by Sri Rajaji, he exclaimed, "Excellent," and welcomed it. Meanwhile on the basis of the agreements reached between the Hindu leaders and the leaders of the Depressed Classes the "Yervada Pact" was formally drafted. Gandhiji cabled the agreement to Mr. Andrews, who was in London, informing him that he would break his fast if the Cabinet accepted the Yervada Pact in toto. And leaders like Sri Tej Bahadur Sapru, Dr. Ambedkar, Mr. M. C. Rajah, Pandit Malaviya and others sent urgent cables to the Premier appealing to him to accept the Pact and thus enable Gandhiji to break his fast.

On the 26th of September, the British Cabinet simultaneously published a statement in England and in India accepting the Yervada Pact in full. Even after the British Cabinet had accepted the Yervada Pact, Gandhiji was in no hurry to break his fast. He wanted to study it carefully and consult again the leaders of the Depressed Classes like Dr. Ambedkar and others. Every one in Gandhiji's camp was taken aback at this attitude of Gandhiji, as the Pact embodied all that the leaders of the Depressed Classes wanted, with the full assent of the Hindu leaders. It also meant further delay, as all the leaders had gone back to Bombay. At last Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, then Vice-President of the Servants of India Society, assured Gandhiji that the Government statement contained the complete acceptance of the Yervada Pact and said "that even we, who are co-operating with you in this matter and are anxious to save your life, even we, had we been in the Government's position, could not have issued a different Communique". Fortunately enough Sri Rajaji, who was present, concurred with Pandit Kunzru and Gandhiji broke his fast on the 26th of September, at 5.15 p. m., in the Yervada prison.

Thus five days after Gandhiji entered on his fast a complete agreement was reached between the four parties, namely the Hindu leaders, the leaders of the Depressed Classes, the British Government and lastly Mahatma Gandhi. This is now historically known as the "Yervada Pact", as it was signed inside the Yervada prison in Poona.

Below is given the Yervada Pact as agreed to by the parties to it with their signatures:—

1. There shall be seats reserved for the Depressed Classes out of general electorates. Seats in the Provincial Legislatures shall be as follows:

Madras	30
Bombay with Sind	15
Punjab	8
Bihar & Orissa	18
Central Provinces	20
Assam	7
Bengal	30
United Provinces	20
Total	148

2. Election to these seats shall be by joint electorates subject however to the following procedure:

All members of the Depressed Classes registered in the general electoral roll of a constituency, will form an electoral college which will elect a panel of four candidates belonging to the Depressed Classes for each of such reserved seats, by the method of single vote, and four persons getting the highest number of votes in such primary election shall be the candidates for election by the general electorate.

3. Representation of the Depressed Classes in the Central Legislature shall likewise be on the principle of joint electorates and reserved seats by the method of primary election in the manner provided for in Clause 2 above for their representation in Provincial Legislatures.

4. In the Central Legislature, 18 per cent of the seats allotted to the general electorate for British India in the said legislature shall be reserved for the Depressed Classes.

5. The system of primary election to the panel of candidates for election to the Central and Provincial Legislatures, as herein before mentioned, shall come to an end after the first ten years unless terminated sooner by mutual agreement under the provision of Clause 6 below.

6. The system of representation of the Depressed Classes by reserved seats in the Provincial and Central, Legislatures, as provided for in Clause 1 and 4, shall continue until determined by mutual agreement between the communities concerned in this settlement.

7. The Franchise for the Central and Provincial Legislatures for the Depressed Classes shall be as indicated in the Lothian Committee report.

8. There shall be no disabilities attaching to anyone on the ground of his being a member of the Depressed Classes in regard to any elections to local bodies or appointment to public service.

Every endeavour shall be made to secure a fair representation to the Depressed Classes in these respects subject to such educational qualifications as may be laid down for appointment to public services.

9. In every province, out of the educational grant, an adequate sum shall be earmarked for providing educational facilities to members of the Depressed Classes.

The Pact was signed in all by forty one leaders belonging to the Hindu Community and the Depressed Classes, drawn from the different provinces with different political ideologies.

THE YERVADA PACT AND AFTER

The day following the signing of the Yervada Pact, happened to be Gandhiji's birthday that year, and it was decided to celebrate the period from the 27th of September till the 2nd of October, as the "Untouchability Abolition Week".

Hindu leaders, who had assembled at Bombay to have consultation with each other to concert measures for the removal of untouchability, met again at another conference on the 25th of September at Bombay, under the Chairmanship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, soon after they had news of the Yervada agreement.

The conference confirmed the Poona agreement and appealed to the leaders of the Hindu and the Depressed Class communities to realize the implications of the Yervada Pact and to make earnest attempts to fulfil the terms of the agreement. The conference further declared, that "No one shall henceforth be regarded as an untouchable by reason of birth and that those who have been regarded as untouchables will, hereafter, have the same rights as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public roads, and other public institutions; and that the first Swaraj Parliament will provide the necessary statutory safeguards if such rights did not receive the recognition at the hands of the Government of the country before the first Swaraj Parliament came into being." The next resolution was an "exhortation to the Hindu leaders to secure by every legitimate and peaceful means the removal of all social disabilities under which the Depressed Classes were suffering and of the bar in respect of Temple Entry." Pandit Malaviya suggested the raising of a sum of Rs. 25 lakhs to carry on a campaign against untouchability all over the country.

With a view to taking concrete steps to implement the Yervada Pact, the Hindu leaders again met at Bombay on the

30th of September under the Chairmanship of Pandit Malaviya and set up the All-India Anti-Untouchability League for the purpose of carrying on propaganda against the observance of untouchability, *i.e.* for throwing open all public wells, dharmasalas, roads, schools, cremato-riums, burning ghats, institutions and public temples to Harijans and for undertaking ameliorative work among Harijans. The meeting appointed Seth G. D. Birla as the President and the late Shri A. V. Thakkar as the General Secretary. The All-India Anti-Untouchability League was renamed first 'The Servants of the Untouchable Society' and finally as the 'Harijan Sevak Sangh'. This literally meant the Society for the Service of the Harijans. It was Gandhiji who gave the new name 'Harijans' to the 'Untouchables'. It meant the Children of God. Gandhiji wanted to convey the idea that the suppressed Harijans were nearer to God than all others.

The work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh required an army of volunteers and plenty of money. Gandhiji felt that both these were not forthcoming as quickly as needed. He wanted to quicken the conscience of the Hindu community and to give them a sense of urgency in regard to the whole work. He, therefore, under-took another fast early in May 1933. On the eve of this new fast, he stated, "Since September last I have been studying the correspondence and the literature, holding prolonged discussions with men and women, learned and ignorant, Harijans and Non-Harijans. The evil is far greater than even I had thought it to be. It will not be eradicated by money, external organizations and even political power for Harijans, though all these are necessary. But to be effect-ive, they must follow or at least accompany inward wealth, inward organization and inward power, in other words, self-purification. This can only come by fasting and prayer. We may not approach God or Truth in the arrogance of strength but in the meekness of the weak and the helpless."

After the fast Gandhiji undertook an All-India tour of nine months for the Harijan cause from November 1933 to July 1934, covering provinces like Andhra Desa, Madras City, Malabar, Cochin, Travancore, Tamilnad, Orissa, Bengal, Assam, Bihar, U. P., Punjab, Rajputana, Ahmedabad, Gujerat, Kathiawar, Bombay City, Maharashtra, Hyderabad, Deccan and Karnatak. Thakkar Bapa followed

Gandhiji through the major part of his Harijan tour. The total amount collected by Gandhiji in this tour amounted to Rs. 8,61,000, which was handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh for carrying on their work in the different provinces of India. Thakkar Bapa, while touring with Gandhiji, organized the Provincial Boards of the Sangh; and side by side with the propaganda carried on by Gandhiji the Provincial Boards also began to take up active Harijan welfare work.

Each Provincial Board consisted of some outstanding Harijan representatives and several other Hindu leaders. Each Provincial Board drew up a careful and comprehensive programme of work itself. The work was divided generally into two parts. The first part consisted of rousing the conscience of caste Hindus against the evil of untouchability and firing them with the determination to get rid of untouchability in every shape and form. The second part consisted of intensive and extensive welfare work among Harijans in many directions. Naturally the first item was taken up by Hindu leaders belonging to the so-called higher castes in order to carry conviction to the minds of the general caste Hindu sections of the community. It was of significance that numerous Brahmin leaders and other Hindu leaders belonging to the so-called higher castes came forward in response to Gandhiji's call to take up this work against the fierce opposition of the other sections, who still wanted to cling on to caste and untouchability. At many places the reformers themselves were subjected to much persecution, but they withstood this bravely and carried the work of the liberation of the Harijans fearlessly forward. This, in turn, created courage and confidence among the masses till then considered untouchables. The result was a great awakening among the Harijans, who picked up courage to stand up against the oppressors. Harijans everywhere raised their own voice in protest and refused to submit to the old tyrants. The old oppressors and the long oppressed thus found themselves working together, shoulder to shoulder, in a movement of liberation of the oppressors' minds from an evil superstition and of the oppressed from their slavery.

Welfare work among the Harijans was naturally spread out over many items. It practically covered every aspect of

their life. The Harijans had suffered for many centuries from religious, social, economic, educational and political disabilities. It would be a long story to relate in detail the nature of these disabilities. To begin with they had to live segregated from the rest of the community. Wells, roads, schools, conveyances, eating houses and most public institutions were closed to them. They could not of course even think of going into the Hindu temples, the doors of which had remained closed to them for at least two thousand years. They were Hindus and at the same time treated as out-castes. Social disabilities took on different shapes and forms in different places. In some places they could not cover the upper parts of their bodies with any clothes. In other places they could not use metal vessels but only mud ones. In many other places the use of umbrellas, sandals or ornaments or the use of carts or cycles were taboo. The use of sugar and ghee could not be thought of in other places. Any Harijan who dared to defy any of these prohibitions would be beaten up by the caste Hindus of the locality. Harijan children could not be easily admitted in common schools and even if admitted had to sit apart from the rest of the children. Thus everywhere and at all times they were made to feel that they were despised outcastes who must live, work and die as a segregated section of the community. Their economic status was one of double-distilled slavery. Often they were bought and sold along with the land on which they worked. Wages were paid or not paid, and increased or lowered, according to the sweet will and pleasure of the higher castes who owned the land. Harijans in general were not only prevented from taking advantage of all education, but were almost completely illiterate. Political rights, they had none. In fact, they did not even know the meaning of political rights or civic rights. Welfare work among them, therefore, had to begin with elementary sanitation and then cover the whole field of health, education, civic rights, economic uplift and political training. This was a tremendous task. But the Harijan Sevak Sangh under the leadership of Gandhiji and many well-known leaders of the Indian National Congress and of other organizations, plunged into this task with revolutionary enthusiasm. Everywhere caste Hindu leaders and volunteers went among the

Harijans to undertake the above many-sided welfare work among them. One remarkable feature of the whole work was that innumerable women workers, belonging to the so-called upper castes, came forward enthusiastically to do this work. The whole process was a mental revolution in the life of the people which daily registered itself in material changes affecting every aspect of their life. In many places Harijans were the traditional scavengers. Gandhiji, therefore, made participation in scavenging work a test for his followers and so thousands of high caste leaders and volunteers plunged into this work, thus taking off with one stroke the superstition that Harijans alone should be made to do such work. As soon as a caste Hindu participated in scavenging work he no longer cared for any caste distinctions. Caste itself was thus completely shaken and doomed through the momentum generated by anti-untouchability work.

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THE HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH'S WORK

The Harijan Sevak Sangh was started on the 30th September 1932, with Shri Ghanshyam Das Birla as the President and the late Shri A. V. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society as its General Secretary. The Headquarters of the Sangh is in Kingsway in Delhi. The President and the Secretary are assisted by a Board consisting of members from the different parts of India, nominated by the President. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is something like the Trusteeship Council of the U. N. O. which, out of humanitarian considerations, takes upon itself the responsibility for the removal of all those social, political and economic injustices which are imposed upon weaker nations, colonies and communities in the world by the more powerful ones. Thus the Harijan Sevak Sangh is a trusteeship organization consisting of caste Hindus and Harijans who are in full sympathy with the programme and policy of the Sangh. No individual, either Hindu or Harijan,

can, as a matter of right, become a member of the organization by paying, as in the case of other organizations, some nominal subscription. The qualification for membership of this organization is different. A member to be nominated to the Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh should perform some definite service to the Harijan cause. He must either have a Harijan as a member of his household or employ him for domestic work or teach a Harijan or pay regular visits to Harijan quarters or render some practical service or other to Harijans. More than all, he must be one who does not countenance untouchability in any form or shape.

Thus the Harijan Sevak Sangh is a Trust and the members of the Board—Harijans and other Hindus—are not only the Trustees of the Funds of the Sangh for the social, economic, moral and political uplift of Harijans but the joint custodians and watchful guardians of the honour of the whole Hindu community.

The nature of the programmes before the Sangh, the great uphill task that it had to face to liquidate untouchability and above all the obligations that the Hindu community owed to Harijans for age-long neglect and tyranny, made Gandhi give the Sangh a constitution which has stood the test of time. Harijan work, according to it, must be taken up mainly by caste Hindus in a spirit of atonement for past sins against Harijans.

AIMS AND OBJECTS

The object of the Sangh is the abolition of untouchability, lock, stock and barrel from Hinduism by truthful and non-violent means. To achieve this ideal the Sangh must establish close contact with caste Hindus and convince them that untouchability is un-Hindu and repugnant to the fundamental principles of Hinduism and opposed to all principles of humanity, equity and justice. The Sangh must be also alive to the need for promoting the moral, social and material welfare of Harijans as well.

The Sangh is an All-India Body, with a Central Board and as many as 22 Provincial or State Branches, carrying on the work of the Sangh within their own respective regions.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh must also befriend the Harijans and remove every trace of untouchability from every walk of life, with a view to ultimately establishing universal brotherhood

among all those who belong to the Hindu and other communities as well.

GENERAL PROGRAMME

From its inception the Sangh had a clear-cut programme for a two pronged attack on the demon of untouchability, firstly to bring about a radical change in the attitude of the caste Hindus towards untouchability, through a whirlwind campaign against untouchability, and secondly to carry on intense welfare activities among Harijans for their social, moral and material advancement.

Gandhiji was a master in the art of educative publicity and propaganda. He used his pen and tongue vigorously and fearlessly in giving expression to his views on untouchability in the columns of his weekly *Harijan* and on innumerable platforms from which he addressed public meetings. In fact he was the greatest publicity agent of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. He faced every opposition from the orthodox Hindus with such frankness and firmness, coupled with truth, non-violence and love that those who came to scoff remained to pray.

The Sangh itself had a well-organized programme of publicity to focus public attention against untouchability. Meetings were organized, conferences were held, and joint celebrations of Hindu festivals and ceremonies were arranged at which Harijans and Caste Hindus participated on equal terms. Processions with placards and slogans were taken out from place to place bringing to the people in villages the new message of freedom to the Harijans.

A large mass of literature, bearing on the sin of untouchability and the need for purifying Hinduism of that sin, was published in the different languages of the country and broadcast widely so as to reach every nook and corner of rural India. Provincial branches of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and private organizations surveyed the conditions of Harijans in different parts of the country and published their reports which were eye-openers to those who were till then ignorant of the detailed conditions of Harijans. These reports publicised numerous disabilities of Harijans resulting in Harijan Sevaks seeking appropriate remedies for their removal.

burying dead animals and tanning their skins. Gandhiji felt, with Ruskin, that all jobs were equally respectable and to set the example, he himself did scavenging work. Gandhiji and his followers demonstrated that a man did not fall in status because he carried the carcass of an animal or skinned and tanned its leather or because he did scavenging work. In fact every follower of Gandhiji received his first initiation in Gandhism by learning to clean latrines and sweeping Harijan quarters. Thousands joined in this work all over India. What was happening was nothing less than a mental revolution among the people of India.

EDUCATION

The Sangh paid special attention to the education of Harijan children. They faced the opposition of caste Hindus in securing admission to Harijan boys and girls into the public schools. Where no schools were in existence the Sevaks either persuaded the local authorities, like Municipalities and Local Boards, to start them or the Sangh itself started schools, day or night schools, as the case may be. One special feature of the activities of the Sangh was the starting of Ashrams for Harijan children where the teacher and the taught lived together as a family.

Apart from this, the Sangh gave numerous scholarships for the higher education of Harijan boys and girls. Thus several hundreds of boys and girls have been helped in their higher education with these funds. Among those, who have thus received help from the Sangh, are now to be found Harijan Cabinet Ministers and M. L. A.s in the several States, lawyers, doctors, engineers, and numerous Government officials, holding gazetted ranks.

The work of the Sangh in this direction was reinforced by the various States' Governments by a series of concessions in fees, grant of scholarships and other facilities for all Harijan children from the elementary stage to the University course. Ten per cent of seats in all schools and colleges have now been set apart for Harijan students in the Madras State, and more are being admitted as they seek admission.

To enable a Harijan to be economically independent and earn his living through a craft, facilities for training in carpentry, smithy,

weaving, rattan work, printing, book-binding, tailoring etc., were given in the special schools run by the Sangh such as the Harijan Udyog Shala at Kingsway, Delhi, the Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati, Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya, T. Nagar, Madras, Harijan Ashram, Allahabad and others, too numerous to mention.

Social status is achieved through one's own economic position, ways of life and by the cultivation of those virtues which make social contacts pleasant and congenial. Any Harijan, who is clean of body and dress, who is of pleasant speech and good manners and who has given up eating carrion, can now certainly attain a status in society which any other normal individual enjoys. He is not put to social or civil disability as before.

Harijans are heavily indebted and improvident, partly because they are addicted to drink and secondly because they borrow freely paying very heavy interest on the principal year after year. In the place of cruel money lenders, the Sevaks tried to provide Harijans with co-operative societies for credit, thrift, better living and for purchasing their daily requirements. The economic benefits of the co-operative movement are being slowly realized by the Harijans themselves everywhere.

Among the innumerable blots of untouchability, the prohibition against temple entry was the blackest. The demand for temple entry, which was made by the Ezhavas of Travancore as far back as 1919, was kept up till Gandhiji took it up seriously and appealed to Hindus to permit Harijans to enter into Hindu temples and offer worship just like other Hindus. He declared, times without number, that the test for the abolition of untouchability was the free entry for Harijans into temples. He pleaded for temple entry for Harijans by and with the consent of other Hindus. The Harijan Sevaks were also engaged in doing propaganda everywhere in favour of temple entry for Harijans. But there were several legal difficulties in the way of securing entry for Harijans into temples, and leaders of public opinion sponsored Bills in the various States' Legislatures to remove them. In the Travancore State, the Maharaja issued a proclamation on the 12th of November, 1936, abolishing untouchability and throwing open all the temples in the

State to Harijans. This was one of the greatest events in the social and religious history of India and generated tremendous enthusiasm in favour of temple entry all over the country. Next in importance was the entry of Harijans into the great and ancient Meenakshi temple in Madura. Following this, the Madras Government passed the Temple Entry Indemnity Act to protect the officers of the temple, who had not prevented Harijans from entering it, and later on Temple Entry Legislation, called the Madras Temple Entry Authorization Act, was passed. Now almost every State has passed a Social and Civil Disabilities Removal Act and a Temple Entry Act, and the age-old disabilities of Harijans have been removed by law.

The Madras State was the earliest to take keen interest in Harijan Welfare work. During the year 1949-50, the Madras Government spent 54 lakhs of rupees on Harijan education, and there were 1293 schools with 2834 teachers and nearly a lakh of Harijan children. Mid-day meals for Harijan children were supplied at a cost of Rs. 12.5 lakhs in 1949-50. Fee concessions were given to Harijans studying in schools and colleges. In 1949-50, a sum of Rs. 5.47 lakhs was spent on this head. The Universities of Madras, Annamalai and Andhra have exempted Harijan students from payment of examination fees. In addition to the 19 hostels maintained by the Madras Government, 356 hostels with 8594 students were given a subsidy of Rs. 11 lakhs. Till the end of 1949-50, as many as 49,208 house sites were assigned to Harijans at a cost of Rs. 24.2 lakhs of rupees. 8978 wells were constructed or repaired at a cost of Rs. 47.4 lakhs. Besides the Government have reserved 827,923 lakhs of acres of land for assignment to Harijans for cultivation, out of which so far 374,788 acres have been assigned and 201,649 acres have been brought under cultivation. The Harijan Welfare Department runs several types of co-operative societies for the benefit of Harijans. Harijans have been exempted from payment of fee while enrolling as advocates, and in respect of recruitment to Government Services age limit restrictions have also been relaxed in their favour. The Harijan Welfare Department has constructed in the city of Madras some tenements for Harijans and provided them with lighting and other facilities. It may be noted here that the Madras Government has provided for an expenditure

of 104 lakhs on Harijan welfare excluding an expenditure of Rs. 6 lakhs on staff in the year 1950–51.

True to the promise given by Gandhiji, the first Parliament of Free India has done away with untouchability by incorporating in the Constitution of India a clause making the observance of untouchability punishable by law. In the chapter on Fundamental Rights, clause 15 (a) states that the State as such shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. The Constitution also declares (Cl. 15. 2) that no citizen of India shall be subjected to any disability, restriction or condition with regard to access to shops, public entertainments, or the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads, and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of State funds or dedicated to the use of the general public. Slavery and forced labour are also prohibited, and they are made offences punishable by law. The reservation of seats for Harijans, on the basis of joint electorates, has been statutorily provided in the Constitution and the manner and method of elections are also laid down. The special provisions relating to reservation of seats in the Legislatures will, however, cease to be operative after ten years from the date on which the Constitution came into force. A further important provision in the Constitution is that the welfare of Harijans all over India will be ensured by the Central Government by the appointment of a Special Officer by the President of the Union of India.

Special representation of Harijans in the Parliament and in the State Legislatures will cease to be in force after a period of ten years, and it is expected that within the next ten years the Harijans will have been pulled up to equality with the general mass of the rest of the people. This means very hard work still ahead. The various Governments and the Harijan Sevak Sangh and other similar organizations will have to do everything necessary to change the social, economic, educational, and political conditions of the Harijans effectively and speedily. It is that process which is now going on, and none dare relax the efforts being made. In fact we must finally reach the state when the Harijans will be completely

from time to time to reconstruct national life and to give education, medical aid and economic assistance to the people. Only, every time an effort was made, national life meant mostly city life and the people meant city people. By some magic of perversity those who mattered most were most forgotten.

The result has been something unique and terrible in history. Education, sanitation, medical aid, prosperity and every amenity of modern life got themselves vividly and richly concentrated in a few hundred towns holding only about 20% of the people. The rest of the picture, where lived about 80% of the men, women and children of the country, tended to become a vast patch of darkness, full of misery, discontent and growing anger. This process went on uninterruptedly during the whole period of British Indian history. British rule, under which the natural and human resources of the country were ruthlessly exploited, attempted to convert India from village life to town life and that too, town life at its worst, and failed. The failure was very costly. It destroyed the roots of India's village economy and almost completely ruined the traditions of village prosperity and Indian culture.

Gandhi took no time to realize the truth about the ruination of the foundations of life in the villages in India. With him, understanding meant action without hesitation or reservation. If we analyse every single thing that Gandhi said and did, we find that he made himself first and last the re-builder of village life in India, *i. e.* of the real life of the people. He said that if the villages perished India would perish and that the villages had nearly perished. He therefore gave all his attention to this foundational work and challenged every one, who wanted the freedom of India, to do the same. It was thus that we had the birth of the great Constructive Programme. The whole meaning of that programme was and is Village Reconstruction. The logic of the Constructive Programme became irresistible. If it was a truly national programme for the vast bulk of the people, then, such work had to be done in the villages and for the villages and through the people of the villages. You could not remain in the towns and uplift the villages. That was what the British rulers and their Indian supporters tried to do in their spare moments of sanity. It would not also do, only to go to the villages to make speeches and to sing patriotic songs

and to create political excitement as in the Swadeshi and Home Rule movements. It was necessary to make a programme of actual day to day work in villages under which the people in the villages would derive a ray of real light to brighten their dark lives. After all, it was the educated people in the towns who had to go and work in and for the villages, even as an atonement. The work had to be such that it would keep the workers in the villages. Something practical had to be done. The first practical thing that Gandhi laid down for real village work was the Charkha programme. No one could go one step forward with it unless the worker stayed down in the village. The Charkha programme was, therefore, significant not merely as cloth production in villages but as the compelling symbol of the workers' identification with the village and its life. But the Charkha movement was only the spearhead of the village movement. If the Charkha was a vital thing it was bound to lead to other developments in the village. If the Charkha movement began and ended with itself, it would only be a poor attempt at village reconstruction. But the Charkha was a vital factor and it, therefore, not only produced handspun and hand-woven cloth, but also a new mind and outlook in the people. The Charkha gave a new meaning and brought a new significance to the whole of the Swadeshi movement. From the Charkha to village industries was an inevitable step in the Gandhian Plan for India. Along with the destruction of cloth making in the villages during British rule had come the weakening of India's rural economy and the progressive ruin of all those industries which for centuries had clustered round the village. The village carpenter, blacksmith, potter, oil presser, leather-maker, etc.—all found their grip on village life being wrenched away slowly but ruthlessly. In the result the whole of village economy had very nearly collapsed. But in the wake of the Charkha movement came the idea that village industries should once more be built up and strengthened. That was how the village industries movement was born. It took the Constructive Programme one big step further into the heart of reality in the life of the people.

2. THE ALL INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

The Swadeshi idea and creed had caught the imagination of the people from the days of the political agitation which followed the Partition of Bengal under Lord Curzon. Swadeshi had come to

mean simply articles made in India anyhow. Textile mills had been set up in Bombay, Ahmedabad and other places and the cloth produced in these mills was Swadeshi. Other factories also grew up for the production of articles other than cloth. Swadeshi thus took the shape of large scale mass production in factories which sprang up every where. This meant a big boom for Indian capitalists. But Gandhi made up his mind that any true Swadeshi must be in terms of the needs of work, employment, production, distribution and consumption for the starving and frustrated millions in the rural areas. He, therefore, wanted to shift the whole emphasis of Swadeshi from large scale factories to small scale village industries in order to give employment, and therefore happiness and prosperity, to the maximum number of people in the country. The 48th session of the Indian National Congress held in Bombay in 1934 and presided over by Shri Rajendra Prasad, at Gandhi's instance, adopted a resolution authorising the setting up of an All-India Village Industries Association. The following is the text of the resolution:-

> "Whereas organizations claiming to advance Swadeshi have sprung up all over the country with and without the assistance of Congressmen, and whereas much confusion has arisen in the public mind as to the true nature of Swadeshi, and whereas the aim of the Congress has been from its inception progressive identification with the masses, and whereas village reorganization and re-construction is one of the items in the Constructive Programme of the Congress and whereas such reconstruction necessarily implies revival and encouragement of dead or dying village industries besides the central industry of hand-spinning, and whereas this work, like the re-organization of hand-spinning, is possible only through concentrated and special effort unaffected by and independent of the political activities of the Congress, Shri J. C. Kumarappa is hereby authorised to form, under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji, an association called the ALL INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION as part of the activities of the Congress. The said Association shall work for the revival and encouragement of the said industries and for the moral and physical advancement of the villages and shall have power to frame its own constitution, to raise funds and to perform such acts as may be necessary for the fulfilment of its objects."

Gandhi had by then come to Wardha on the invitation of the late Seth Jamnalalji, who placed his extensive garden land with a good building in it at the disposal of the new organization. This place was named Maganvadi and became the headquarters of the A. I. V. I. A. The foundation members of the A. I. V. I. A., who also constituted the first Board of Management, were Shrikrishnadas Jaju, J. C. Kumarappa, Gosiben Captain, Dr. Khan Saheb, Shoorji Vallabhdas, Dr. Prafulla Ghosh, Laxmidas Ashar and Shankerlal Banker. The Board of Advisers consisted of 18 persons including Rabindranath Tagore, J. C. Bose, P. C. Roy, C. V. Raman, Jamal Mohamad, G. D. Birla, Sam Higginbotham, M. A. Ansari, Robert Mccarrison and others. Week after week Gandhi elucidated in the pages of the *Harijan* the objectives and programmes of the work of the A. I. V. I. A. and Kumarappa, under his advice and guidance, plunged into the work of touring, training and organizing. Members were enrolled and Agents appointed throughout the country. Certified shops selling only products of village industries sprang up in many places. A great wave of enthusiasm for the revival of village industries thus arose and spread in India.

3. THE GROWTH OF MAGANVADI

Maganvadi became the headquarters of the A. I. V. I. A. The work of the A. I. V. I. A. fell into five parts i. e. (1) Research, (2)Production, (3) Training, (4) Extension and Organization and (5) Propaganda and Publication. All these items of work were taken up in and from Maganvadi. A Village Industries' Laboratory and a Village Industries' Museum were established. The Museum is now known throughout India as the 'Magan Sangrahalaya' and is named after the late Maganlal Gandhi who was one of the pioneers in the Khadi movement. It is full of rare and beautiful exhibits from all over India and foreign countries depicting human skill in numerous handicrafts and village industries. A Village Industries Court was then built up. This consisted of several departments, each specializing in a village industry and conducting its own production and research work. These departments were those of food processing, oil pressing, bee-keeping, magan dipa, soap making, paints and varnish, hand-made paper, toy making, village pottery and palm-gur. Every year students came from the different parts of India to be trained in

various village industries. A. I. V. I. A. workers and specially Kumarappa went out again and again into every part of the country to help local people survey and develop village industries suitable to their places. While Gandhi himself long remained the dynamic propagandist for village industries, Kumarappa brought to bear on the work of educating the public in the economics of village industries his mind trained and sharpened from his long stay and study in England and in America. Looking at the huge pile of paper cuttings preserved in Maganvadi, it is not difficult to get an idea of the great and pioneering work Kumarappa did in those early years in the life of the A. I. V. I. A. Every department in Maganvadi produced an authentic volume on a particular village industry and these were published in English and in Hindi. A monthly journal called *The Gram Udyog Patrika* was started to expound the economics of village industries, to publish reports of work and research and to inspire the people to push on vigorously with the movement. This monthly journal also appeared both in English and in Hindi. Further, Kumarappa produced a number of books dealing with every aspect of rural development. The literature that thus grew up was considerable and thought provoking. The A. I. V. I. A. publications are now in the hands of thousands of Constructive Workers engaged in one or the other items of village reconstruction. They have undoubtedly exercised an abiding influence over the minds of the people in one of the most critical epochs in the history of modern India. As a result of the whole work, there also emerged a new school of economics, which may aptly be called 'The Economics of Non-Violence', inspired by Gandhi and brilliantly elucidated by Kumarappa.

4. THE GROWTH OF THE OVEMENT

The Village Industries Movement, like those of Khadi and Harijan emancipation, was born and developed within the long and difficult political struggle for the freedom of India. While it therefore secured wide popular support it was frowned upon by the British rulers and their officials. By turning peoples' minds and will in the direction of self-reliance and self-sufficiency, the Village Industries Movement added a fibre of strength to the political struggle. When the first Congress Governments were set up in various provinces the new Ministries were in a mood to take up village industries seriously.

And Gandhi was there also to tell them to do so. The A. I. V. I. A. then came into prominence and numerous important meetings were held in Maganvadi attended by Ministers and leaders to make plans for pushing up village industries everywhere. Kumarappa had to respond to numerous calls. He surveyed conditions in some of the provinces and drew up reports for their Governments containing concrete suggestions for the development of village industries. The reports which Kumarappa drew up for the Central Provinces and the North West Frontier Province in 1939 and 1940 will long hold the field for their authenticity on the subject of rural development in those areas.

The situation in regard to village industries can be well understood from what Kumarappa wrote in August, 1946. Here is the relevant extract:—

"The advent of popular Ministries, at a time when the country is facing famine and shortage in primary consumption goods, may prove a blessing, provided advantage is taken of the situation to launch a country-wide programme to increase the productivity of the people in selected channels, so as to meet and make good the deficiencies. To be effective such a programme has to be unified throughout the land and well co-ordinated between the Provinces. Patch work schemes and isolated attempts will not carry us far. In order to facilitate consultation and discussion between the Cabinets of the various Provinces, a conference of Ministers was held in Poona on the 31st of July 1946. A Memorandum on Governmental Functions had been circulated among the Ministers previously. There was discussion on the Memorandum. What emerged from the conference has been published in book form under the title 'An Overall Plan for Rural Development.'

Now that the Central Government also will function under the direction of our national leaders, may we hope that this resolve to plan for economic development, starting with an attempt to strengthen the human body with a balanced diet and to provide all primary needs of the people, will materialise in no distant future?

This approach to planning is both simple and inexpensive. Being broad-based it is calculated to bring relief to the masses

in the shortest possible time. This can be the surest method of combating black-marketing, inflation and the ration muddle. The conditions in the country will brook no delay."

An Overall Plan for Rural Development by Kumarappa is a compact volume containing the charter of freedom and prosperity for the villages. It is now in the hands of all those who have any interest in rural development in India. You will see it on the desks of Cabinet Ministers and in the hands of the humblest Constructive Workers. It contains a section on "The need and nature of Planning", another on "Forms of Industries", a third on "The Overall Plan" and the fourth on, "Village Industries". In the Appendix we have the two important resolutions adopted by the All-India Ministers' Conference held in Poona in July 1946. The two resolutions indicate the pace and scope of the movement. They were as follows:—

(1) "That in view of the acute scarcity prevailing in the country, with respect to the primary requirements of the people, especially food and clothing, plans for economic development should centre round the farmer and agriculture, and should be motivated with the object of providing balanced diet, adequate clothing and other articles of primary human need, for every citizen in the land, and that for this purpose, steps have to be taken to ensure that the land available for cultivation is distributed by proper regulation such as licensing between various crops needed by the community and in the required proportion;"

(2) "That in order to achieve real democracy, it is necessary, to organize contiguous areas—villages or a group of villages—on a self-sufficient and a self-governing basis, through multiple purpose co-operative societies and grain banks which will plan their economic life on a decentralized basis, reducing the need for money economy to a minimum and restricting external trade to proved surpluses."

Since the adoption of these resolutions some of the Provincial Governments (now State Governments) have set up machinery for rural development. Madras and Bombay have led the way. U. P., Bihar and Orissa have also done some good work in this

direction. Constructive Work organizations and Ashrams and other institutions have contributed their share in the revival and development of many village industries. But the vast undone compares ill with the little done so far. In other words the whole of rural development yet awaits final fulfilment. Neither the Central nor the State Governments will be able to run away from this task. The case for village industries is not that Gandhi or Kumarappa or any one else is asking for it, but that the development of village industries is an absolute necessity in a country like India caught up in its present baffling situation. It is a case of a vast and growing population, practically imprisoned within the static boundaries of a country, with little hope of overflowing into any other spaces of the earth and whose problem of problems is how to find employment for many millions of unemployed. That the economic development in India should inevitably be largely on a decentralized basis of production, distribution and consumption is one of those basic facts of the situation from which no party or group in India can hope to escape.

The ideology behind the Village Industries Movement and its plans and programmes have already become part of the mental and material landscape in India. What has been achieved already is not to be sniffed at. To give only one example, we might take the case of palm-gur. Nearly three years ago the Government of India set up a Palm-Gur Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and borrowed the services of one of the workers of the A. I. V. I. A. as Palm-Gur Adviser. Until this work was started there was large-scale palm-gur making only in the two traditional tracts of Madras and Bengal. But the palms are there all over India, more than 50 millions of them, and these are palms which can be used only for palm-gur making. The attempt now is to utilize all these palms for producing gur and sugar. Numerous whole-time workers have been trained and put into this work. Palm-gur production bids fair to be one of the biggest rural industries in India giving employment to lakhs of people and adding to the food and nutrition of the whole country. Under the Central Oilseeds Committee set up by the Government of India, it is possible that a similar attempt may take shape in regard to the ghani industry

i. e. village oil-pressing. But unlike palm gur, the ghani is already spread out all over India and requires only some care and organization to reassert itself as one of the major rural industries of India. The A. I. V. I. A. is working in close alliance with the Central Oilseeds Committee and is pushing it to take up country-wide and systematic organization of the ghani industry.

5. ACHIEVEMENTS

The Village Industries Movement under Gandhi is now 17 years old. It would be worthwhile to briefly summarise its achievements so far. In any study of these achievements, we must keep in mind what Gandhi wrote in 1934, soon after the organization was set up. What he then wrote was, "The Central Board of the A. I. V. I. A. will not be a Board of administration, but only a watch tower for the whole of India giving guidance. We want to avoid centralization of administration, we want centralization of thought, ideas and scientific knowledge."

To begin with, the Village Industries Laboratory in Maganvadi has done useful research work in oils, soap, magan-dipa, paints and varnish etc. But research was not confined only to the Laboratory. Each one of the departments in Maganvadi has carried out some research or other in its own line along with production work. The wood and stone Chakkis for paddy husking and flour grinding have undergone a number of changes. The present stone Chakki with its ball bearing and screw arrangements is a new Chakki altogether and far more efficient. The most remarkable developments are in the Ghani department and the latest model Maganvadi ghani has come out as the best in all-India competition. Equally in the hand-made paper department there are many improvements. The manifolding paper we now make from rags has already won a good name. Similarly there are improvements in the instruments of production in other departments. The bee-keeping department has very nearly succeeded in domesticating the rock-bee which is one of the most difficult things to do. The pottery department has achieved a measure of success in the glazing of ordinary cheap mud pottery and in spreading the technique of the Magan-Chula. The Maganvadi Bakery has kept alive the idea of whole-meal wheat bread

at a time when adulteration of flour has been raised to the level of an art. The palm-gur department has devised and made popular a small centrifugal hand-machine for making sugar from palm-juice in the home. Kumarappa has opened the Agrarian Research Centre in the Seldoh village. The latest development in Maganvadi however is the conversion of Gram Udyog or Village Industries into Gram Udyog Nai Talim or Rural Adult Education in and through village industries.

The last item deserves further elucidation. The educational revolution initiated by Gandhi in India is best known as Nai Talim or New Education. The fundamental basis of Nai Talim is education in and through work. The whole of Basic Education is education in and through village handicrafts. It was felt that if work was the best medium of education, then there was in Maganvadi such a rich variety of multi-process work that the whole of it could be utilized for a full-blooded programme of Adult Education. This has now been done. Candidates are no longer given training merely in village industries but in adult education in and through village industries. The various processes of production work in the different departments are now correlated to studies in dietetics and nutrition, sanitation and health, geography and history, mathematics and science, economics and sociology, Indian and world cultures, and finally to the concept and practices of Sarvodaya. Candidates trained in Gram Udyog Nai Talim will later open village industries production centres, which would at the same time be centres of adult education. All those who are engaged in productive work will thus be able to earn their living and get their education at the same time and that right in the village environment. If the experiment succeeds it might well lead to a revolution in the whole field of rural adult education. That naturally brings in the story of the training of workers going on from year to year without a break in Maganvadi. Fifty to sixty workers, on an average, are yearly trained in Maganvadi. Many of them so trained have helped in spreading the message and technique of village industries in many parts of the country. The number of students and workers, who come in for training, has steadily increased. Besides this the teachers and staff in Maganvadi go out often to different parts of the country to train workers in their own areas in Ghani, palm-gur, bee-keeping,

Chakki, Magan-Chula, etc. A number of States got their rural development officers trained in Maganvadi. Recently two smaller editions of Maganvadi have started their own training of workers for village industries in the Madras State, one in Tamilnad and the other in Andhra, and the staff in charge are those trained in Maganvadi. Institutions for village industries in Kerala, Tamilnad, Andhra, Mysore, Orissa, Bihar, Gujerat, Bombay and Punjab have not only drawn inspiration but obtained practical guidance from Maganvadi. The A. I. V. I. A. publications, nearly 30 in number, as already stated, have helped Constructive Workers everywhere to understand the significance of village industries and to work them out. Two of the publications particularly, *viz.* *Why the Village Movement* and *The Economy of Permanence*, both by Kumarappa, have influenced the minds of most of those engaged in the task of village reconstruction in India. Through his writings and work, Kumarappa has presented the Constructive Programme as the effective alternative to Communism. It will be no exaggeration to say that numerous educated young men and women in the country would have gone over to Communism but for the teachings and work of Kumarappa. Kumarappa has shown that the Constructive Programme, if wholly implemented, can give all that Communism can give to the common masses of the people plus something more of great value. In other words, the Constructive Programme can lead to a human society enshrining within itself the values of justice and the values of non-violence at the same time. The Village Industries Movement has thus stood out for a great ideal of social good. It has become the embodiment of the economics of decentralization, of self-sufficiency and of lasting peace. There can be no peace without the Economics of Peace and it is as a great movement for the economics of peace that the Village Industries Movement stands today.

IV

THE NAI TALIM MOVEMENT

(BASIC EDUCATION)

E. W. ARYANAYAKAM

The modest beginning of Basic Education was a small article in the *Harijan* (July 31, 1937), where Gandhiji, while discussing the economics of prohibition, said, "As a nation we are so backward in education that we cannot hope to fulfil our obligations to the nation in this respect in the given time during this generation, if the programme is to depend on money. I have, therefore, made bold, even at the risk of losing my reputation for constructive ability, to suggest that education should be self-supporting. By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education. I would, therefore, begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus every school can be made self-supporting, the condition being that the State takes over the manufactures of these schools".

"I hold that the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education. Only every handicraft has to be taught, not merely mechanically as is done to-day, but scientifically, *i. e.*, the child should know the why and the wherefore of every process."

This was the small beginning of one of the greatest revolutions in education.

Gandhiji himself was fully conscious of the revolutionary character of his proposal. "My plan to impart primary education through the medium of village handicrafts like spinning and carding, etc., is thus conceived as the spearhead of a silent social revolution fraught with the most far-reaching consequences. It will provide a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of the present social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes. It will check the progressive decay of our villages, and lay the foundation of a juster social order in which there is no unnatural division between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' and everybody is assured of a living wage and the right to freedom. And all this would be accomplished without the horrors of bloody class-war or a colossal capital expenditure such as would be involved in the mechanization of a vast continent like India. Nor would it entail a helpless dependence on foreign imported machinery or technical skill. Lastly, by obviating the necessity for highly specialized talent, it would place the destiny of the masses, as it were, in their own hands."

Revolutions, whether social, political, economic or educational, are rarely welcome. They are feared with a sub-conscious understanding of their implications. And this fear, following some subtle sociological and psychological laws, takes the form of opposition. Yet, at the same time, there are always a few who have seen the vision and are willing to risk everything for the great adventure of translating this vision into life.

The history of Nai Talim during the past few years has followed the same pattern.

In the press and on the platform, in committee meetings and casual conversations, 'Gandhiji's revolutionary proposal' was abundantly criticized and opposed, sometimes vehemently, by parents, educationists, and others. These were not insignificant criticisms. They were based on an entirely different conception of the social order.

Gandhiji, the quiet originator of this 'revolutionary proposal', continued his work explaining and answering the critics with his characteristic gentleness through his talks and his writings. And he did not stand alone. He had attracted a few others also who had seen the vision and were ready to translate it into educational practice. As a first step, a small conference of social and educational workers, including the Education Ministers of the different provinces, was called in Wardha in October 1937, the main broad principles of this 'New Education' were accepted, and a small committee was appointed to prepare a tentative scheme and syllabus. This tentative scheme, as prepared by the committee, was accepted by the Indian National Congress in March 1938. The first institution of Basic Education was opened at Wardha, in April 1939. The several provinces followed suit and experiments in Basic Education were started by Provincial Governments and educational workers and institutions in almost every province of India. By October 1939 there were 247 Basic Schools and 14 training schools, trying to work out the experiment of Basic Education in Kashmir, Delhi, United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, Central Provinces, the Bombay Presidency, the Madras Presidency and the State of Mysore.

The next important event in the history of 'Nai Talim' was the first Conference, held in Poona in October 1939. At that critical hour, when the second World War had started, India had been made a party to the War without her consent, and the Congress Governments were on the eve of giving up office on this moral issue. At this juncture the most important contribution made by Basic Education was the declaration of the President of the Conference that "a new ideology of education based on justice, co-operative endeavour, productive work and respect for human individuality is the most powerful guarantee of peace, justice and humanity."

The Conference also recorded its feeling that the work of Basic Education was of such vital importance to the future of the country that it should be continued without interruption, whatever the political changes that might occur in the near future.

The next period in our national history was the period of individual Civil Disobedience. This was fundamentally a moral movement of a strictly restricted scope. No living system of education, however, can remain divorced from the main stream of its nation's history and the movement had its influence on the work of Basic Education, which was then in its very early stages.

The second Conference of Basic Education at Jamianagar was held in April 1941 in the midst of this movement. Gandhiji's message to the Conference set the note for the next two years.

> "I hope that the Conference will realize that the success of the effort is dependent more on self-help than upon Government, which must necessarily be cautious even when it is well-disposed. Our experiment to be thorough has to be at least somewhere made without alloy and without outside interference."

During this period the number of Basic Education experiments declined. The Orissa and the Madras Governments stopped the experiment by a Government notification. The Bombay Government hesitated whether to stop or to continue, but allowed the Basic Schools to go on. The Central Provinces Government discontinued its work, though not officially. Some national institutions had to close down for lack of funds and public support. Yet the few institutions and workers who continued the work did it in full faith, feeling that it was the only solution to many problems of our national life. The Bihar Government made a long and careful report on the work of the 27 Basic schools in Champaran District during 1940-41 and stated in conclusion: "The total effect of Basic Education, as envisaged by the framers of the scheme, should be the development of the whole personality of the child. It is too early to pronounce a definite opinion on the matter, but we feel that the results so far achieved in various directions mark notable advancement towards the goal".

The next great Movement in our national life was the Movement of 1942. It profoundly stirred the entire nation. It seemed at first that the life of the whole country was plunged into darkness. But it was the darkness before dawn. It was the same with Basic Education. Institutions were closed, workers were in jail, and it seemed, for the time being, as if Nai Talim was out of the picture of national life. Yet, in this darkness, Nai Talim was being born anew.

The originator himself came out of his detention in prison with a new vision of Nai Talim. One of his first utterances was on the subject of New Education. He said, "I have been thinking hard during the detention over the possibilities of Nai Talim until my mind became restive.

"We must not rest content with our present achievements. We must participate in the homes of the children. We must educate their parents. Basic Education must become literally education for life."

The second chapter in the history of Nai Talim begins with this illuminating definition of it, as "co-extensive with life itself." Again and again in his talks and writings, Gandhiji tried to explain this new conception of Nai Talim as education for life and through life. "It had become clear to me", he said, "that the scope of Basic Education has to be extended. It should include the education of everybody at every stage of life."

It was felt necessary at this stage that workers engaged in constructive work, and specially Basic education, should meet together to try and understand this new interpretation of Nai Talim, to assess the work of the past five years, and to plan the future programme in the light of co-operative discussion of the enlarged scope of the movement. A Conference of national workers was called at Sevagram in January 1945, and was opened by Gandhiji with the following words :

"Up to the present, although our education was new, we have lived as it were in a bay sheltered from the open sea, and, protected in another way also, in that our work was restricted in its scope. Now we are being driven out of our bay and thrust

into the open ocean. There we have no guide except the pole-star. That pole-star is village handicrafts. Our field now is not merely the child of seven to fourteen years of age; the field of Nai Talim stretches from the hour of conception in the mother's womb to the hour of death. So that our work has become very great, yet our workers remain the same.

"Let us not care about that. Our real friend is God who is Truth. He will never deceive us. This Truth can be our friend only when we stick to Truth and care for nothing else. There is no room in it for show, for egoism, for anger and cruelty. We become teachers of the villagers, that is to say, we become true servants of the villagers. The reward is work, and the witness is our own heart,—there is no other. Whether or not we have a friend in the search for Truth, makes no difference.

"This Nai Talim does not rely on money. The cost of Nai Talim comes from the education itself. Whatever objections may be raised, I know that real education is self-supporting. There is no shame in that, but there is novelty. If we can do it, if we can show that this is the way to the true development of the mind and brain, then those who laugh at us to-day will sing the praise of Nai Talim, and Nai Talim will become universal. And the seven lakhs of villages, which to-day display our poverty, will themselves become prosperous: their prosperity will come not from without, but from within, from the true industry of every villager. May this dream be a true vision!"

The next task before the workers of Basic Education was how to work out this conception of Nai Talim as education for life through life, into an educational programme. This programme naturally divided itself into four parts corresponding to the four stages of life:

1. Adult Education or education of men and women in all stages of life, including the care and education of the expectant mother and the mother, while the baby is yet dependent on her.
2. Pre-Basic Education or the education of children under seven.
3. Basic Education or the education of children from seven to fourteen.

4. Post-Basic Education or the education of adolescents who have completed Basic education.

Four committees were appointed by the Conference, to prepare and revise schemes of education for these four stages of life. The village of Sevagram was chosen as the first field for work on a complete programme of Nai Talim.

A Pre-Basic school was opened, and beginnings were made towards working out a programme of adult education according to the following objectives: "The aim and object of Adult Education is to educate village adults to lead a better, fuller and richer life, both as individuals and as social units. This education should be imparted through some suitable rural handicraft and other creative and recreative activities. It is education for life and through life. It will touch the life of the villager at all points and will utilize all life situations for the above purpose." This programme of Pre-Basic and Adult Education for the village, closely co-ordinated with each other as two aspects of one integral educational process, forms the basis of Nai Talim. This is what Gandhiji meant when he said, receiving the purse of the Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Trust: "The scope of Basic Education includes the education of the whole of society, beginning with the children and going up to adults and old men and women. It has to be imparted through the practice of handicrafts, village sanitation and medical relief, preventive and curative, especially with regard to deficiency diseases."

"It is my dream," he said, soon after he came out of detention, "that in a few years, there will be real wealth in our villages and the villagers will be clean and healthy, peaceful and happy. If this is not so, I shall understand that there is something wrong with our work in Nai Talim".

The next stage was the education of boys and girls between seven and thirteen; in a complete programme of Nai Talim, this education must naturally grow out of the roots of Pre-Basic and adult education in the village. In this field, the workers had had the experience of five to seven years of work and could plan their future programme with greater confidence on the basis of this experience. A committee was appointed to revise the first syllabus of

Basic Education prepared by the Zakir Hussain Committee in March 1938, and to plan a complete educational programme of eight years on the basis of experience of the work with children and adults in the villages for the last ten years. The experience of workers both in Basic education and in other aspects of constructive work was taken as the basis of this educational programme, which forms the centre of the process of Nai Talim. The main fundamentals of this programme are described here.

OBJECTIVES

The ultimate objective of Basic education is to help all boys and girls in India to grow into:

i. Citizens of a new social order based on co-operative work as envisaged by Nai Talim, with an understanding of their rights, responsibilities and obligations in such a society;

ii. Individuals, whose personalities have had opportunities of balanced and harmonious development.

The social aspect of this education was given the first place, to bring out clearly the philosophy of Nai Talim, which accepts individual good, not as an end in itself, but as an integral part of the common good.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

To achieve this objective, the educational programme for eight years was planned round the following main activities:—

1. Essential knowledge, habits, attitudes and skills, necessary for clean and healthy living (individual and social). This will include activities relating to personal and community cleanliness, study of the elements of physiology, hygiene, sanitation, dietetics, and physical education.

2. Training in citizenship—practical and theoretical—at home, at school, in village, country and the world—including studies in history, geography, civics and elements of sociology and economics.

3. Capacity for self-sufficiency in food,—ability to grow vegetables sufficient for the family consumption—and acquaintance with the fundamental processes and principal tools of agricultural operation—ability to cook a simple meal.
4. Capacity for self-sufficiency in cloth—ability to produce cloth from raw cotton.
5. Capacity for self-sufficiency for shelter.
6. Basic Craft—1. Agriculture and gardening.
   2. Spinning and weaving.
   3. Wood-work.
   4. House-building and repair.
7. General Science and Mathematics.
8. Social Studies.
9. Study of the Mother-tongue.
10. Art.
11. Music.

The standard of attainment at the end of Basic Education may be summarised under the seven following main heads:—

1. Capacity for clean and healthy living.
2. Capacity for self-sufficiency in food and clothing.
3. Mastery (knowledge and skill) over the basic crafts—sufficient for earning one's own living (balanced diet and other minimum necessities).
4. Training in citizenship—neighbourliness and trustworthiness, understanding of the social, economic, cultural and political problems of India and the world.
5. Sufficient mastery over tool subjects such as language and mathematics to enable the pupils to carry on their daily activities efficiently and further their knowledge after the completion of the Basic course.
6. A scientific attitude to life: acquaintance with the fundamental scientific, mathematical and mechanical principles in connection with the activities of daily life.
7. Sufficient introduction to the recreative activities to enable the pupils to appreciate true art, form good taste,

entertain the community and use their own leisure with profit and pleasure.

POST–BASIC EDUCATION

The first batch of pupils in the Basic schools in Bihar and Sevagram completed their course of seven years in January 1947 and it was needful to define the objectives and the programme for the next stage which corresponds to the University Education under the existing system. A committee was appointed. The task before the committee was not merely an extension of the Basic syllabus. It was no longer a question of preparing children for their future life, but it was a question of training adolescents to fulfil their functions as men and women, as parents, wage-earners and citizens on the completion of the course. If Nai Talim is education for life, the course of Post-Basic Education must not only give the students a vocation or train them for all-round individual life, but must also prepare them for wise parenthood and creative citizenship in the New Social Order based on co-operative work, as envisaged by Nai Talim.

This question, therefore, led the workers into the very heart of the philosophy of Nai Talim. After careful thinking and seeking, the following were accepted as the objectives of Post-Basic Education:—

1. Post Basic Education like Basic Education should be developed round some form of productive work or socially useful activity.

2. The social objectives of Post-Basic Education remain the same as in Basic Education, namely to prepare a useful and active member of society with a clear understanding of the rights and obligations of citizenship and willing to play his part in evolving the new social order.

3. This education must be complete in itself.

4. The course of studies should be developed round activities necessary for the development of the nation, from which the pupils may choose according to their capacity and natural bent.

5. Each course of studies will develop according to the necessities of the course, the average period being three to four years.

6. The medium of instruction should be the regional language.

7. The course should be so organized that the pupils earn enough for their balanced diet and other minimum necessities through the activity or activities selected as the centre of their educational programme.

8. The ultimate objective of Nai Talim is that every boy and girl of India should also receive Post-Basic Education. This will entail no additional expenditure for the State, as it is expected that Post-Basic Education will be a self-sufficient unit, both economically and educationally.

9. The greatest necessity before the nation today is that of teachers of Nai Talim. Therefore, the first task before the institutions of Post-Basic Education is the preparation of teachers. The objective of Nai Talim can be fulfilled by organizing an institution of Post-Basic Education as a self-sufficient, self-reliant society based on co-operative work, which fulfils all its necessities in balanced diet, clothing, intellectual and recreational life through co-operative work.

When the members of the committee met Gandhiji, he threw out the challenge that Post-Basic Education must and should be entirely self-supporting. If it were not so, we should understand that something was fundamentally wrong with our work. If Nai Talim cannot be self-sufficient we cannot reach out to the seven lakhs of villages. He further said that we must carry out the experiment of Post-Basic Education quietly before the whole picture is placed before the nation. It was decided, therefore, to start two experiments in Post-Basic Education, one in Kumarabagh, Champaran, Bihar and one at Sevagram. These experiments on the educational programme, the self-sufficient aspect and the technique of Post-Basic Education will be carried out carefully, and on the basis of their experience, a tentative syllabus of Post-Basic Education may be prepared. The results of these experiments of the past two years will be placed before the Conference by the two institutions of Post-Basic Education. It can be said, however, without any hesitation or doubt, that Gandhiji's expectation regarding the self-sufficient aspect of Post-Basic Education can be fulfilled.

Almost all the Provincial Governments have, by this time, introduced Basic Education through their Education Departments. The programme of Basic Education accepted by the Provincial Governments, however, was one of four to five years only. The reason put forward for the curtailment of this minimum demand of eight years' compulsory and universal education made by both the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the Central Advisory Board of Education was the financial one.

The Hindustani Talimi Sangh went very carefully into both the educational and the financial aspects of Basic Education and passed the following resolution in its meeting held on 13th November, 1948:

> "The Sangh noted with satisfaction the results reported from several quarters with regard to production of useful goods when craft-work was given its rightful place in the educational programme. The results justify the hope that in schools where the significance of craft-work as an educative force is fully realized, production will be enough to meet the running cost of the schools. This is, however, possible only in full Basic schools of 7 or 8 grades, as the last three grades contribute much more than proportionately to the total craft-production of the school. The Sangh views with misgiving the tendency in some provinces to reduce the duration of Basic Education to five years for financial reasons. The Sangh also believes that the continuation of education to the eighth grade will, if craft work is properly organized, entail no net extra expenditure. For educational as well as financial reasons, the Sangh feels convinced that the duration of Basic Education should in no case be reduced to less than eight years."

In Gandhiji's last talk on Nai Talim on the 14th of December, 1948, he said: "Basic Education is generally interpreted as education through craft. This is true to a certain extent, but this is not the whole truth. The roots of Nai Talim go deeper. It is based on truth and non-violence in individual and collective life. Education is that which gives true freedom. Untruth and violence lead to bondage and can have no place in education.

"This true education must be easily available to everyone. It is not meant for a few lakhs of city people but must be within easy reach of millions of villagers. This education cannot be given through the dry leaves of books. It can only be given through the book of life. It does not need any expenditure in money. It cannot be taken away by force. It can have nothing to do with the teaching of sectarian dogmas or ritual. It teaches the universal truths common to all religions.

"The teachers of Nai Talim can do their work effectively, only if they have faith in Truth and non-violence. Then they can draw even the hardest hearts towards them, as a magnet. A teacher of Nai Talim must have all the qualities of the wise man described in the second chapter of the Gita."

This is the task left behind by the Father of the Nation for us, the workers of Nai Talim. We have promised in the last conference of Basic Education that we shall try our best to carry out his work to our last breath. This promise has been given both by our friends, who are the law-makers and administrators in the Provinces and in the Centre to-day, and also by the Constructive Workers. Our friends, the legislators and the Ministers, have wider fields of service and greater resources both in men and money. As Nai Talim is a programme of national education, it can only be put into effect by those in charge of national education.

By 1949, according to reports available, there were nearly 80 Basic Teachers' Training Centres and over 500 Basic Schools in different parts of the country.

In the programme of Nai Talim the Education Departments of the Provincial Governments and the organizations and institutions of Constructive Work should co-operate with each other, and their work should be complementary. The Education Departments of the Governments have to carry out the programme of the application of the principles of Nai Talim on a nation-wide scale. On the other hand, the institutions and organizations of Constructive Work must serve as pioneering institutions where an attempt is made to carry out the programme of Nai Talim in its entirety. The task is difficult. The resources in money and workers available for institutions of Constructive Work are limited. Yet the goal they have set before themselves is

a very difficult one. They must justify through their work, Gandhiji's challenge that the work of Nai Talim does not depend on money, that it must be self-sufficient. They must also fulfil his dream of the happy and healthy village, which has the real wealth of co-operative effort as a result of Nai Talim.

We hope that the workers of Nai Talim in the villages of India will rise up to this challenge.

V

THE GO SEVA MOVEMENT

RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

What was distinctive in Gandhiji's contribution to the resurgence of India was his almost instinctive perception of the basic needs of his country and of the ways in which those needs could be met by appealing to what was permanent and noble in the nation's heritage. He came not to destroy, but to fulfil. He wanted to retain and develop all that was sound and good in the nation's tradition. This is nowhere seen better than in his devotion to the Cow and his efforts to revive the cow and bullock-centred economy of village India. Cow protection was to him sound economy and good religion. It was no fetish worship to him. The cow symbolised for him the entire sub-human world. He held that through the cow man is enjoined to realize his identity with all that lives. Moreover the cow in India is the giver of plenty. Not only does she give milk, but she also makes agriculture possible. Therefore, with his unerring insight into the needs of the people and the practical ways of meeting those needs, he made cow-protection one of the main planks in his Constructive Programme. Quoting the ancient Rishis, he said, "Save the

cow and everyone will be saved". "They have given us", he said, "this key to knowledge. We have to extend and not destroy it".

The Go-Seva Sangh is one of the key organizations in the national reconstruction planned by Gandhiji. It was formally organized by him at Nalwadi, Wardha, on 30th September, 1941. An earlier organization, started at Belgaum in 1924 and functioning at Sabarmati, was merged with this. Its object is to bring about an all-round wealth of cows and bullocks in India. It aims at making the present Indian society realize the necessity of scientific and extensive cow-keeping in India, at disabusing their minds of unscientific notions and broadcasting knowledge of animal husbandry with a view to improving the breed of the cow. But the whole aim of the Go Seva Sangh can be found in the word 'Seva'. No doubt the cow must be utilized to the fullest extent possible, but while doing so the cow must be given a fully fair deal in return. *Go-palan* from the point of view of 'Seva', and *Go-palan* from the economic point of view alone are not the same. The cow is part of the basis of a non-violent society. The cow should be treated as a member of the family and as we make the fullest use of every member of the family for the sake of the whole family, the cow also should be used to the fullest advantage for the country. That means the capacity of the cow to give milk should be increased to the maximum, its bull-calves should be made as sturdy as possible to help in agriculture; only such cows, as would be capable of producing good milkers and sturdy bullocks, should be encouraged and that we should experiment to find out how the cow can be best maintained with such feeds as are available to the common farmer in the country.

In the programme of giving the cow a fair deal in return, there are items, which those who, deal with the cow merely as a producer of wealth, will reject. The Go Seva Sangh holds that a cow, which has supplied milk throughout her life, should be looked after during old age and allowed to die a natural death. Hides of slaughtered cows may fetch a higher price, but the Go Seva Sangh will promote the use of the hides of dead cows only. Gandhiji taught that kindness and consideration for the cow at every stage was part of the culture of the people.

The Go Seva Sangh has aimed at improving the conditions of agriculture through attention to the cow. It has sought to improve such breeds as the farmers in various parts of the country possess already, instead of importing new breeds from long distances. The Sangh has conducted several experiments in this connection during the last several years at the Gopuri Goshala near Wardha. It is a matter for satisfaction that the Government and the people alike have begun to take a keen interest in the work of the Go Seva Sangh. The idea has now gained ground that agriculture and *Go-palan* should be organized everywhere hand in hand. There are several schemes already promoted by the Government and people's organizations with this end in view.

From April 1951, the Go Seva Sangh has become the Krishi and Go Seva Vibhag of the Sarva Seva Sangh which is the overall body co-ordinating the various organizations of Constructive Work in India. It is not without significance that agriculture is also now entrusted to and coupled with the work of what was previously the Go Seva Sangh. Experiments and training of workers in agriculture and in *Go-palan* are now going on simultaneously under the Krishi and Go Seva Vibhag.

Work under the direction, and on the lines, of the Go Seva Sangh is carried on in several of the States in India. Workers trained at Gopuri, near Wardha, are mostly in charge of the work in the various States and experiments are being carried on at several centres to improve local breeds of cows. The most noteworthy effort in this line is the experiment carried on at Gopuri to improve the Gaolao breed. The average daily milk-yield per cow has steadily increased during the last four years. The main Goshala of the Sangh is at Pipri, about three miles from Wardha, on the Arvi Road. This centre came under the Sangh in 1947. The Pipri Goshala keeps many heads of cattle, cows, stud-bulls heifers and bull-calves. The Goshala sells these to the farmers and to other Goshalas. Training of workers in *Go-palan* has gone on steadily at Gopuri during the last few years. More than 400 workers were trained between 1947 and '51. The Government of Madhya Pradesh deputed several students for training and after

training they joined the Veterinary Department and took charge of animal husbandry in the villages. The training centre was shifted from Gopuri to Pipri in July 1951.

The Sangh runs a model milk supply centre for Wardha and this is called the Go-ras Bhandar. Three big Goshalas and many village milk-men are working in collaboration with this Bhandar. Village milk-men are given small loans to purchase cows and are provided with feeds at cost price.

Go Seva work has now been organized to a certain extent in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Sourashtra, Bihar, Madhya Bharat, Hyderabad, Bombay, Bengal, Assam and Madhya Pradesh. The central institution in Gopuri makes available to workers in the different States results of experiments and general guidance. The Secretary of the Krishi and Go Seva Vibhag has to undertake continuous tours in various parts of the country to help local workers and to organize the movement for better and more cows throughout the land.

The movement is yet only in its infancy. It is however daily gathering momentum. It is such work that neither the people nor the Government can ignore. Re-construction of villages is impossible without improving the cow in India. In fact Indian village economy is largely cow and bullock-centred. In any attempt to improve the cow in India, village workers come up against numerous other vital problems affecting village re-construction. Take for instance the problem of common pasturage in the villages. This was fairly well guaranteed in the old days in the rural areas. But in recent times violent hands have been laid on pasture lands in the name of increased cultivation. It has been forgotten that cultivation itself, in a large measure, depends on the cow and the bullock and that to starve them is to starve agriculture in turn. This is only one of the many problems which workers have to study and solve as they go on with the Go Seva Movement. The Go Seva Movement has, therefore, made all village re-construction work more real. Its significance, therefore, is far-reaching.

As usual, in all such movements in India, Gandhiji took the lead in bringing home to the minds the people the urgent need for

the work of Go Seva. First in the pages of '*Young India*' and then in those of the '*Harijan*' he wrote again and again revealing the tragic situation in the country in regard to cows. He published facts and figures and formulated the principles upon which the movement of Go Seva should be based. He went further and formulated practical plans and schemes. He created a great mental stir in the country for the new programme and he drew into the work men of importance and influence. The late Shri Jamnalal Bajaj became the President of the first Managing Board of the Go Seva Sangh and it contained such veterans as Shri Narhari Bhai Parikh, Swami Anand, Acharya Vinoba, Shri Santikumar Morarji and others. The Go Seva Sangh, which is now the Krishi and Go Seva Vibhag of the Sarva Seva Sangh, has thus inherited one of the biggest items in the Gandhian Constructive Programme. The scope of its work is as vast as the country itself. Luckily there are yet to be found sound and good traditions of cow-keeping in India. Occasionally some of these traditions have been completely corrupted by the present-day greed for quick profits. But the Indian villager can easily understand and appreciate the ideals and programmes of the Go Seva Sangh, because the cow and the bullock mean so much to him. The good old traditions have to be strengthened and expanded and, wherever necessary and proper, modern scientific methods have to be applied. It is in this great task that the Sangh is now engaged.

VI

THE HINDUSTANI PRACHAR MOVEMENT

(COMMON NATIONAL LANGUAGE)

AMRITLAL NANAVATI

"Every cultured Indian will know in addition to his own provincial language, if a Hindu, Sanskrit; if a Muhammadan, Arabic; if a Parsi, Persian; and all, Hindi. Some Hindus should know Arabic and Persian; some Muhammadans and Parsis, Sanskrit. Several Northerners and Westerners should learn Tamil. A universal language for India should be Hindi, with the option of writing it in Persian or Nagari characters. In order that Hindus and Muhammadans may have closer relations, it is necessary to know both characters."

Thus wrote Mahatma Gandhi 42 years ago in his famous book, *Hind Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule.* A well-experienced, practical and spiritual doctor as he was, even then, he felt the pulse of India and was sure of his diagnosis and even more sure of his remedies. To cure Indian humanity of all that caused disunity was one of the aims of his life and work. He realized from the very beginning that without a common language

for the whole of India, besides the provincial languages, the unity of all the people of India will remain a distant dream.

Thus we see Gandhiji, as early as in 1917, formulating his plan for a common national language in the words he uttered in the course of his presidential address at the Gujerat Educational Conference, held in Broach that year. Gandhiji laid down the minimum requirements for a common national language in the following manner:—

1. It should be easy for the Government offices.
2. It should be possible for the people of India to conduct all their religious, economic, political and cultural business in that language.
3. It should be one spoken by the largest number of people in India.
4. It should be an easy language for the nation as a whole.
5. There should be no emphasis on local or temporary conditions alone.

Those were days when all educated Indians were imitating the English in everything and particularly in language. This process of imitation had proceeded so much that the cultural life of the people was in danger. Gandhiji at once raised the flag of revolt against what was happening. He totally rejected the idea of English being suitable as a common national language for India. English could only remain for inter-national intercourse. Gandhiji held that the only language that could fulfil all the necessary requirements was Hindi. Here is the definition of Hindi he has given:

"Hindi is that language which is spoken by Hindus and Muslims in India and which is written in either the Devanagari or Urdu script".

He did not believe that Hindi and Urdu were separate languages. In some parts of the North, Hindus and Muslims speak the same language. The difference arose because Pandits and Moulvis insisted on emphasising Sanskrit or Arabic, one against the other. About the script Gandhiji had his own views. He said, "For the present Muslims will certainly write in the Urdu script and most of the Hindus will write in the Devanagari script. There are thousands of Hindus who write Hindi in the Urdu script. When there will

not remain the slightest suspicion between Hindus and Muslims and all reasons for suspicion have disappeared, then might come the time for a re-consideration of the whole question of script".

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Shri Purushottamdas Tandon, who had started the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in 1910, were attracted by Gandhiji's insistence on Hindi as the only possible national language. Gandhiji was elected the President of the Sammelan held in 1918, in Indore. In his presidential address at Indore he gave vigorous expression to his views once more. After the session of the Sammelan in 1918, Gandhiji did not sit idle nor did he allow the Sammelan people to do so. The greatest need for the spread of Hindi was in South India where the prevalent languages were Tamil, Telugu, Canarese and Malayalam, which belonged to the Dravidian group of languages and are far removed from Hindi and other languages in the rest of India. Gandhiji, therefore, started an organization called "Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha", under the auspices of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, with its headquarters in Madras. Later on it was decided that the Hindi Prachar Sabha in Madras should be an independent body and it was agreed that the Sammelan should leave the field in South India to the Hindi Prachar Sabha. Gandhiji raised several lacs of rupees for the spread of Hindi through the Hindi Prachar Sabha in South India. The Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha is today one of the biggest non-official organizations in the whole of India. There are hundreds of centres under it in Tamilnad, Andhra, Kerala and Karnatak which teach Hindi. The number of teachers trained by the Hindi Prachar Sabha must be some thousands. The Sabha has also published more than a hundred books in the four South Indian languages to make the study of Hindi easy for the people in the South. Today the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha is functioning like a huge undeclared Hindi University in South India. The number of students, who appear for its various examinations every year, will be easily more than those appearing in half a dozen Indian Universities put together. The result is that Hindi has made fairly rapid progress in South India and the gulf between the South and the rest of India promises to be bridged within reasonable time.

Throughout India all national educational institutions, under the inspiration of Gandhiji, gave particular importance to the teaching of Hindi from 1920 onwards. In 1925, the Indian National Congress passed a resolution that its business shall, in future, be conducted in Hindustani as far as possible. Thus the official name of the national language adopted by the Congress became Hindustani. Gandhiji and his co-workers used the two names, Hindi and Hindustani, as synonymous. As the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan accepted Gandhiji's views on Hindi, Congress leaders like Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Shri Jamnalal Bajaj began to take a keen interest in its activities and to help in its work. In 1935, Gandhiji was elected for the second time the president of the Sammelan, which was held again in Indore. This time it was decided that the Hindi Prachar Movement should be started vigorously in non-Hindi speaking provinces in Northern and Western India. In 1936, the Sammelan held in Nagpur under the presidentship of Dr. Rajendra Prasad considered a proposal made by Shri Jamnalal Bajaj and Shri Kaka Kalelkar that a Committee independent of the Sammelan should be formed for Hindi Prachar work in the North and West of India. But Shri Purushottamdas Tandon insisted that this work also should be under the auspices of the Sammelan and Gandhiji agreed. The work was started with its headquarters in Wardha under Shri Kaka Kalelkar who took up the responsibility for the work in Sind, Gujerat, Maharashtra, Bombay, C. P., Bengal, Orissa and Assam. The Movement thus spread speedily over the whole country. The organization in Wardha became known as the Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Samiti. In 1937, there arose a difference of opinion between the Gandhi group and the Tandon group. This came to a head in 1940. The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan passed a resolution in 1941 laying down that Hindi and Urdu are different and that the Sammelan and its branches, especially the Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Samiti, should use the word Hindi alone for the Rashtra Bhasha and further employ only the Nagari script. This was setting aside Gandhiji's ideas on the national language. The result was that Gandhiji, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Shri Jamnalal Bajaj and Shri Kaka Kalelkar and other members resigned from the Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Samiti. In May 1942 they formed the Hindu-

stani Prachar Sabha at Wardha, with Dr. Rajendra Prasad as its President, with the object of spreading Hindustani as laid down by Gandhiji. The Hindustani Prachar Sabha aimed at bringing Hindi and Urdu nearer to each other and to evolve a common tradition for both. Then followed the great 'Quit India' Movement for the independence of India under Gandhiji in 1942. All Constructive Work was paralysed in the conflict between India and Britain, till the release of the leaders from prison in 1944. At a meeting of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha held in November 1944, the work was revived again with vigour.

When India was divided in 1947, the point arose whether it was still necessary for the Sabha to pursue the same policy, *i. e.*, Hindustani in both the Nagari and Persian scripts. Gandhiji, who was then in Calcutta, sent a draft resolution for a meeting of the Working Committee of the Sabha, which was held in Delhi on the 6th of September 1947. He wrote, "India is divided. Are our hearts divided? Will there be two national languages because there are two Governments? There is a movement that Hindi in Nagari script should be the national language of the Indian Union and Urdu in the Persian script the national language in Pakistan. If this happens, then it is clear our hearts are also divided. It is the duty of the Sabha to prevent this. There is no necessity to change the policy of the Sabha." Thus until the last, Gandhiji clung to his view. Whatever be the controversies of today, there is no question that, Gandhiji foresaw long ago the need for a common national language and through many years of hard work and organization he did at last make that possible.

VII

THE KASTURBA TRUST MOVEMENT

(LIBERATION OF WOMEN)

SUSHEELA PAI & SHYAMLAL

Gandhiji has been rightly called the greatest liberator of Indian womanhood. It was he, more than any body else, who was responsible for raising Indian womanhood to its full height. He considered women as the embodiment of sacrifice and suffering. While including the welfare of women as one of the important items in the Constructive Programme, Gandhiji wrote, "Men have not realized that woman must be a true help-mate of man in the mission of service. Woman has been suppressed under customs and law for which man was responsible and in the shaping of which she had no hand. In a plan of life based on non-violence, woman has as much right to shape her own destiny as man has to shape his. But as every right in a non-violent society proceeds from a performance of duty, it follows, that rules for social conduct must be framed by mutual co-operation and consultation. They can never be imposed from outside. Men have not realized this truth in their behaviour towards women. They have considered

themselves to be lords and masters of women instead of considering them as their friends and co-workers."

The inside story of the events leading to the formation of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust is an interesting one. The death of Kasturba Gandhi, while in detention in the Aga Khan Palace, on 22nd February, 1944, caused nation-wide grief and mourning. The position she held in the life of the nation, and the affection and reverence that she commanded from old and young, stirred the country to the very depth. Therefore it was decided to organize a fund for the purpose of liberating and serving the women of India and which at the same time might be a fitting memorial to the great woman who had devoted her whole life to the service of the people. Shri Thakkar Bapa and Shri Devdas Gandhi, after consulting a number of friends, arranged to issue an appeal over the signatures of about 100 leading persons in the country. This was done on the 8th of March, 1944 and the late Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya headed the list of signatories. Since Gandhiji was completing his 75th year on the 2nd of October, 1944, the appeal was for a fund of Rs. 75 lacs to be collected before that date and to be utilized for the service and welfare of the women of India. There was spontaneous and enthusiastic response to the appeal. Luckily, Gandhiji was also released from prison in May, 1944. By the 2nd of October, when the fund was presented to Gandhiji, the amount collected far exceeded Rs. 75 lacs; in fact, the total stood well over Rs. 100 lacs.

The deed of the settlement of the Trust came into operation from Ist April 1945. Gandhiji was prevailed upon to accept the Chairmanship of the Trust and Shri Thakkar Bapa was appointed the Secretary. At the meeting of the Trustees held on lst July, 1944 Gandhiji explained his ideas about the utilization of the Fund and said, "Kasturba was a simple woman devoted to village life, actually living and serving among villages. The object of the Fund should, therefore, properly be the welfare of village women and children." Thus the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust came into existence for work among women and children in the villages of India. The main object of the Trust was not only to relieve village women from insanitation, disease, ignorance and poverty but to develop in them the qualities of fearlessness, self-reliance and strength to enable them to take their rightful place in a free society. The

programme included Nai Talim (Pre-Basic, Basic and Post-Basic Education), improved Health Services, Village Industries, general Village Welfare and *Go-palan* and Agriculture.

Gandhiji insisted from the beginning that the Fund should be spent through the agency of trained women workers. The Executive Committee of the Trust, therefore, decided that all centres of work under the Trust must be in charge of women workers only. The very first programme which the Trust took up was one for training a large number of women workers, who would settle down in villages and carry out the programme of the Trust among village women. It was decided that one year of general Gram Sevika training should be compulsory for all workers and that special training should be given to select workers for another year. The training consisted of the following :—

1. Gram Seva—specialising in Balwadi, Craft Work, Child Welfare, *Go-palan* and Co-operative Movement.
2. Basic Training.
3. Gram Udyog,-weaving, paper making, local crafts, etc.
4. Midwifery and Nursing.

Another important step taken by the Executive Committee was the adoption of a scheme for establishing and financing a net work of centres in the various provinces under full-time trained women workers. The inflexible rule of the Trust was and is that every penny should be spent only in the villages and for the women and children of the villages. Gandhiji went one step further and insisted that no place would be considered as a village for the purposes of the Trust which had a population of more than 2000. In other words he wanted all the money to be spent in and for real villages only.

It should be remembered that the Movement for the liberation of Indian women was begun by Gandhiji long before the Kasturba Trust was set up. In fact, from the days of the earliest Satyagraha Movement, which he started in 1920, women had come out of their seclusion to respond to his call. Gandhiji's non-violent Movements for the freedom of India enabled thousands of women to participate in the struggle. Along with men thousands of women also went to prison and took up one or the other items of the Constructive Programme. The peculiar combination of Constructive Work and non-violent fights for freedom stirred the mind of the women

of India and they found that Gandhiji's was a revolution in which they could play their full part. Even so, when the Kasturba Trust actually started to function, there was a paucity of trained women workers. That was why the foremost task before the Trust was to train workers and to start training centres for this purpose in every province. Gandhiji had great faith in the inherent power of Indian womanhood, and so he fearlessly entrusted the whole responsibility to women workers. Experience of the subsequent years amply justified the faith that he put in them and the hope that he had cherished. Every woman worker put her whole heart and soul into the work and the result was, that in a few years, there were a net work of centres and sevikas scattered all over India. To serve in an Indian village, and that for a woman worker, is a difficult task indeed. The conditions are very depressing to begin with. Ignorance, poverty, superstitions and above all the curse of caste and untouchability surround the workers and test the best and bravest of them. Looking back at what has been achieved so far, one can say that it redounds to the credit of the Kasturba Trust workers that they have successfully crossed many a hurdle by their patience, courage and spirit of service. In many places they have been instrumental in checking untouchability, the evil of drink and purda. Medical relief, economic relief through spinning, adult education, sanitation work and running 'balwadis' have been some of the items of work by means of which they have captured the heart of the villagers. This kind of work was never by any means easy or simple. In the socially backward areas of the country the sevikas have had to face extreme hardship and misunderstanding and humiliation. But they were never defeated and stood their ground well.

The centres of work under the Kasturba Trust are always in villages. This has to be so under the rules of the organization. These centres are, therefore, often in distant and out of the way places. When the work of the Trust began, it was very seriously asked whether young women workers would have the courage to go and settle in such centres. It was even argued, that even if the workers had the courage, it would be wrong and dangerous to allow them to do so. Under all such fears and criticisms, it was easy to see the old world idea that woman was

the weaker sex and incapable of such work on her own. The experience of the last six years has completely disproved these fears and doubts. In every State in India today, there are the women workers of the Trust scattered over the length and breadth of the country-side, who have quietly settled down in numerous centres of work and made themselves completely at home among the villagers. Every such centre has become the point of a new life and a new enthusiasm in the villages. The reports of the Trust can show many instances of girls and women who have faced up to every kind of problem that the village can throw up. In many places Gram Sevikas have had to fight very hard for the Harijans with the caste people. The villages are still dominated by caste Hindus and they are generally willing to help the sevikas in every good work except that of the removal of untouchability. The chief problem is that of the wells, which are generally in the caste Hindu quarters and Harijans are not permitted to draw water from them. As soon as a sevika in a village gives her attention to this problem troubles arise and much of the co-operation of the caste people is withdrawn. It takes a good deal of courage and tact before a reasonable solution is found. The most popular item of work in the programme of the Trust is that carried out by those specially trained as village midwives and nurses. A good midwife is straight away accepted as a member of the village family and all doors are opened to her. Balwadi work is also another popular item. In many places, therefore, a trained midwife and a general *Gramsevika* work together.

The Trust has whole time Agents in almost every State or linguistic area. Each Agent has a provincial training centre, so that training can be given to women in their own regional languages. The syllabus and projects for training are the same throughout India. Much care was given in drawing up the syllabus of training. It was carefully checked up finally by Gandhiji himself. Any visitor to any of the provincial training centres would be struck with the fact that the whole training is based on self-reliance and service. There is strict community life at the training centres and all work, from the cleaning of latrines to the kitchen, is done on a community basis, every trainee sharing in the common work. Life is busy and hard from early morning till late in the evening. The training is for two years and during this period girls are well

equipped for the work in villages. Those who come in shy, timid and full of hesitation go out with heads erect, brave hearts and a keen determination to carry out the programme of the villages allotted to them. Parents and relations of the trainees have been among the first to testify to the remarkable change that the training has brought about in the mind, character and outlook of the girls.

It would be worthwhile to summarise quantitatively the achievements so far. A qualitative assessment of results will be far more difficult. During the last six years the total number of candidates trained under various schemes is about 1000. The number of *gramseva* and midwifery centres is now more than 300. These trained workers and these centres are throughout India and they are being added to steadily every year. A big all-India training centre has now been built and is called Kasturbagram. This is situated in Indore. Here will come, from every part of India, select women candidates for training in the various items of village work as laid down by the Trust, and after training they will spread themselves out over the various provinces. Kasturbagram is also the headquarters of the Trust now. The basic idea is that of training women workers for the villages under village conditions. So far as medical work is concerned more emphasis will be laid on preventive medicine than on curative. When the central training scheme in Indore is developed fully it is expected that five hundred women can be trained there simultaneously in the different items of work.

The Kasturba Trust is thus a mission of women for women. Till it appeared on the scene there was hardly any all-India organization of women to work among the women of the villages. Some of the all-India organizations of women, which were there earlier, confined their activities to the cities and towns and they called their work social work. But from the very start the Kasturba Trust reversed this approach. It directed all attention and effort back to the villages. It can, therefore, well claim to be the first all-India organization of women to pioneer with work for women by women in the rural areas. Gandhiji as the Chairman of the Trust and Shri Thakkar Bapa as the Secretary, gave a great impetus to the whole work, which took on the proportions of a national movement. The organization has kept faithfully to and developed steadily along the lines laid down by these two great servants of the people.

While six years ago, the Trust found it difficult to attract women for training for work under it, it is not now able, in some of the Provinces, to cope with the rush of applicants. The very fact that women are now everywhere coming forward to undergo training and to take part in the work in increasing numbers, is in itself indicative of the beginning of a significant social revolution in the country. The Kasturba Trust has opened up a great vista of adventurous and healthy living and much-needed service before the women of India. Many of those already trained and sent out to work at different centres would otherwise have simply idled away their time and added to the burdens of society. Many widows and deserted women, whose lives would have been a burden to themselves and to their families, have now joined in the great crusade for their own and the country's redemption. This new way of life, this transformation, has brightened up many a home and village. The movement is steadily gathering strength and attracting more and more women all over the country. The work of the Kasturba Trust has added reality to the whole of the work of village reconstruction. The Indian village is still essentially conservative and women play a silent but effective part in it. The women, more than the men, are the repositories and guardians of the old traditions. Without a change in their mind and outlook, village life cannot be changed at all. Men workers in an Indian village have generally to stop at the doors of the homes in the village. But it is inside the homes in the village that the whole of village life is shaped. Trained women workers alone can fully penetrate village homes, and therefore the village mind. In that lies the whole significance of the Kasturba Trust Movement for the future of India. There is no doubt that those in charge of the work, as also the workers at the numerous centres, fully realize this challenge of the situation. That is why they are all plunging into the work with added enthusiasm.

The Gandhian Constructive Programme has covered many fields of service and has achieved a measure of success in all of them. But it is in and through the Kasturba Trust that the Constructive Programme is reaching out to a final fulfilment.

VIII

LOOKING AHEAD

G. RAMACHANDRAN

In the preceding chapters under "Creative Revolution", readers will undoubtedly get a glimpse of the many-sided non-violent revolution in India under Gandhi. But that revolution has yet to fulfil itself in India and it has hardly touched the life of the world outside India. Gandhi himself had repeatedly stated that unless India showed the way it would be idle to expect the world to follow. His passionate and vibrant dream was that India would some day show the way. But if that is ever to happen, Constructive Workers will have to go much further ahead than they have been able to do yet. The success of the non-violent revolution in India depends entirely on the fulfilment of the Constructive Programme. That was the Gandhian thesis and no one has challenged it yet. It is one thing to say that non-violence is incapable of achieving the aim of a casteless and classless society. It is totally another thing to say that non-violence can succeed without the Constructive Programme. In other words the link between the Constructive Programme and non-violence should be absolutely clear at least to Constructive Workers. The burden of proof, that non-violent revolution can lead to a just and peaceful human society, thus falls on the Constructive Workers. It

is a tremendous burden. The question is, can Constructive Workers shoulder that burden? If so, what must Constructive Workers do? This is a big question to answer. But the following answer may be illustrative of what Constructive Workers can do today.

Constructive Workers must realize at once that the static mind will be the ruin of all their work. All Constructive Work should be increasingly made more broad-based on the understanding will of the masses. Constructive Workers should reach out to fresh fields of vital needs and thus, themselves, keep on growing along with their work. They must pull out of the ruts of routine and tradition created in their own work. Constructive Workers cannot simply look back and be complacent. They must look forward and keep moving forward or they will be pushed aside by those who are willing to do so. There is, for instance, the problem of land and agriculture in our country. For a variety of reasons, Gandhi did not include this work in the Constructive Programme during the period of India's struggle for political freedom. Land and agriculture were so overwhelmingly dominated by the direct agencies of the British Government that, Gandhi thought it would be unwise to attack the evil of subjection at that point. But today, under altered conditions, the foundational character of land and agriculture challenges Constructive Workers at every turn. The Charkha Sangh, the Gram Udyog Sangh, the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the Talimi Sangh, the Go Seva Sangh and the Kasturba Trust have all to grapple with this problem, if they wish to press on with their work, to touch the life of the people on every side. In the whole of Harijan work today there is no more pressing problem than that of giving minimum living and working space to Harijans on the land. In fact, the Harijan Sevak Sangh is today standing helpless in the face of this challenge. Harijans form the majority of landless agricultural labour in India. Then again, nearly half of agricultural labour in villages is feminine labour, and therefore, the Kasturba Trust will have to reckon with it, if they wish to organize women in villages for a fuller and better life. No organization of Constructive Work, which has so far specialized in any particular direction, need give up its own emphasis or contribution. But they have all to combine in dealing with the basic problem of land and agriculture in a wholly non-violent manner. Instances like these can be multiplied to indicate the vital need to dig the roots of the Constructive Work deeper into the soil of reality

and to extend the branches in an ever widening sky of fresh achievements.

The next great task is that of building up the organic unity of all Constructive Work under the Sarva Seva Sangh. That unity can be achieved now only within and through the Sarva Seva Sangh. The paramount need, therefore, is to strengthen the Sarva Seva Sangh. The idea that political action and Constructive Work should always be separated has to be given up. Political action will certainly mean participation in the work of legislation and Government. Constructive Workers must combat the idea that all power will corrupt all people. If that is true then every Government will be a corrupt Government for all time. The last four years, since India became independent, have been of crucial importance in deciding the pattern of future national reconstruction for the whole country. Constructive Workers were unable to influence the shaping and the implementation of national policies and programmes. If the next few years also pass in the same way without Constructive Workers being able effectively to influence national policies, then indeed will all Constructive Work be submerged by different ideas and programmes.

The triple burden on Constructive Workers is thus of fresh and wider experimentation, unification and the generating of their own power to influence State policies and action. Constructive Workers are groping for leadership of the highest quality in this crisis. Leaders of Constructive Work have crippled themselves by clinging to the view that all political action is some kind of sin. This is astounding when one recalls that the Constructive Programme was born in the heart of a revolution and has set before itself revolutionary objectives. Constructive Workers need not all strike out for power or position for themselves. But they must all take up the work of training and organizing the millions to be active and effective citizens to promote the making of a "Constructive Work State". Thus alone can they help and guide the people to go further than a "Welfare State". May Constructive Workers, therefore, in the coming years look ahead, may they achieve their own unity in the universal human family and may they purify, not only the individual or dedicated groups, but the whole of society.

Jesus inspiring the Economics of Peace in Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [Times of India

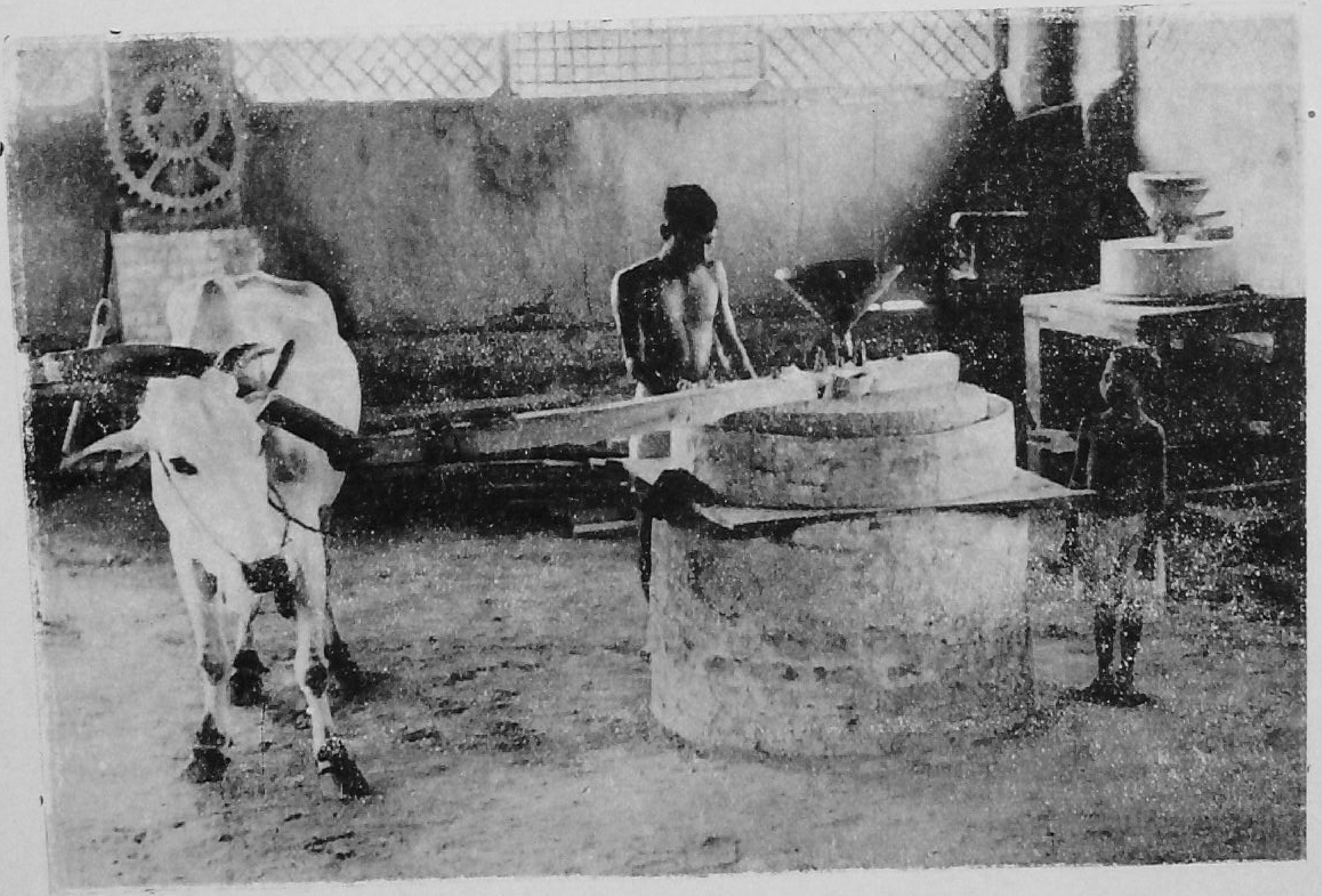
X

Main Entrance, Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [Times of India

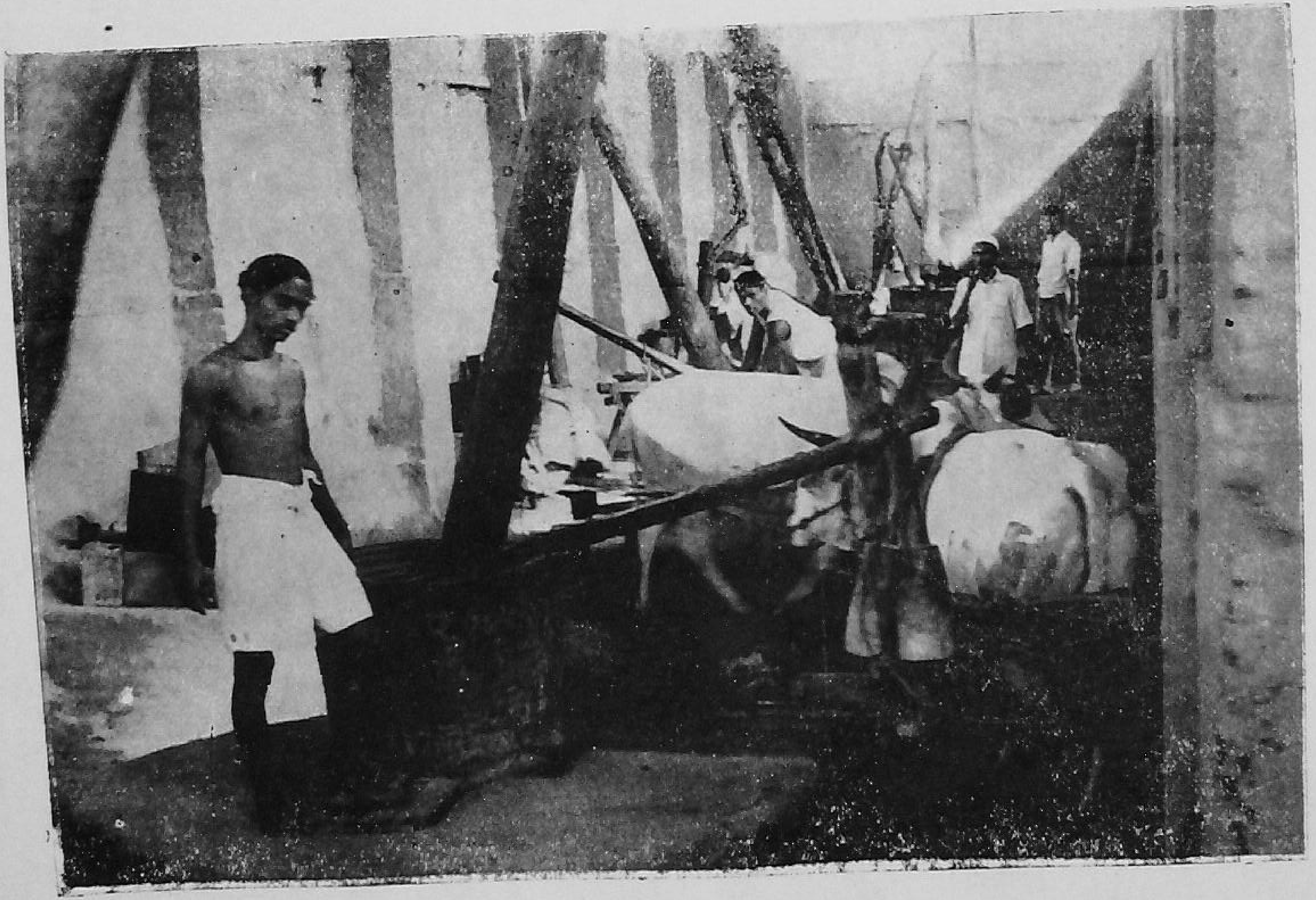
Wooden Chakki at Work

By Kind Courtesy] [*Times of India*



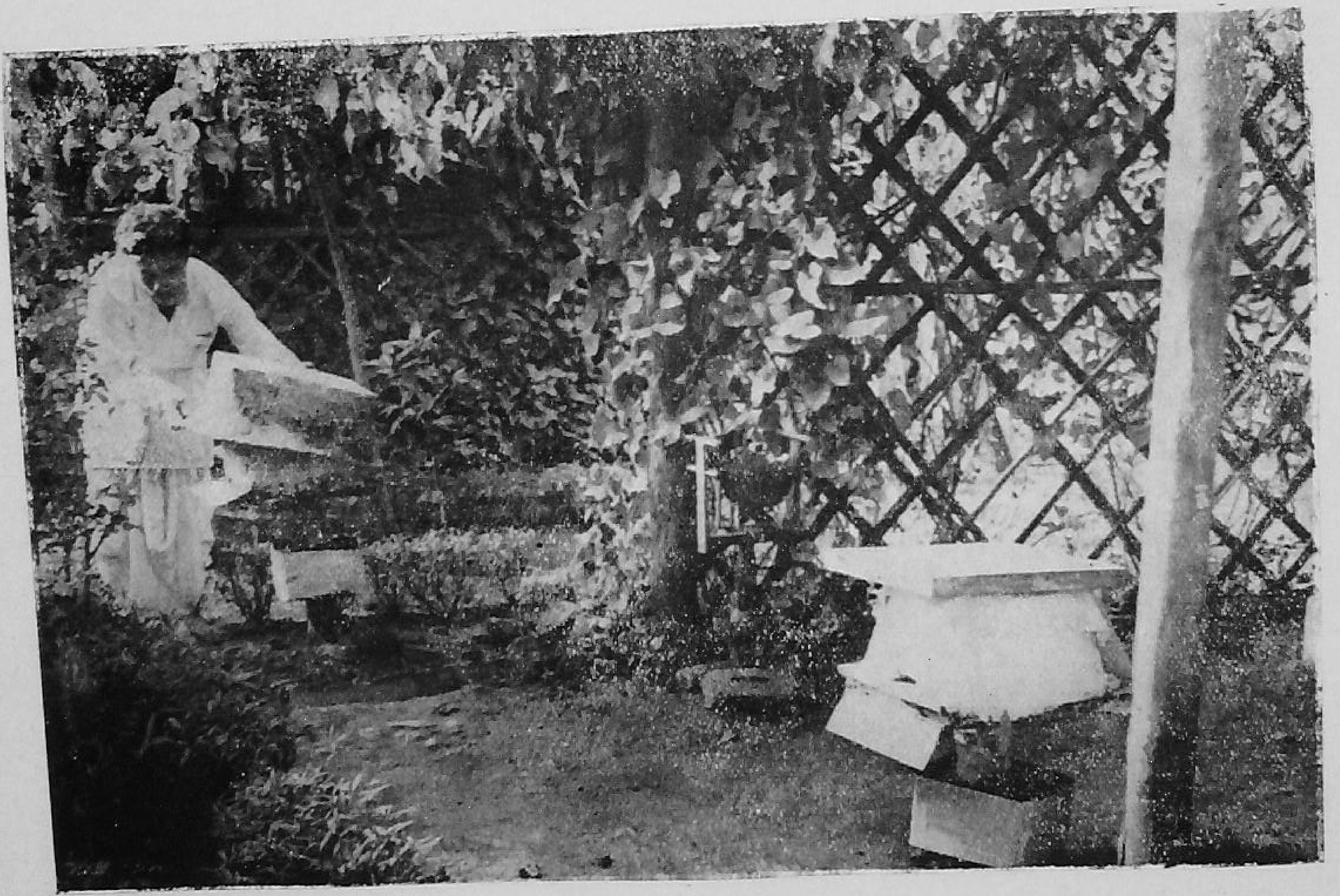
Bullock Power in the Chakki Department

By Kind Courtesy] [*Times of India*



Ghani Department in Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [Times of India

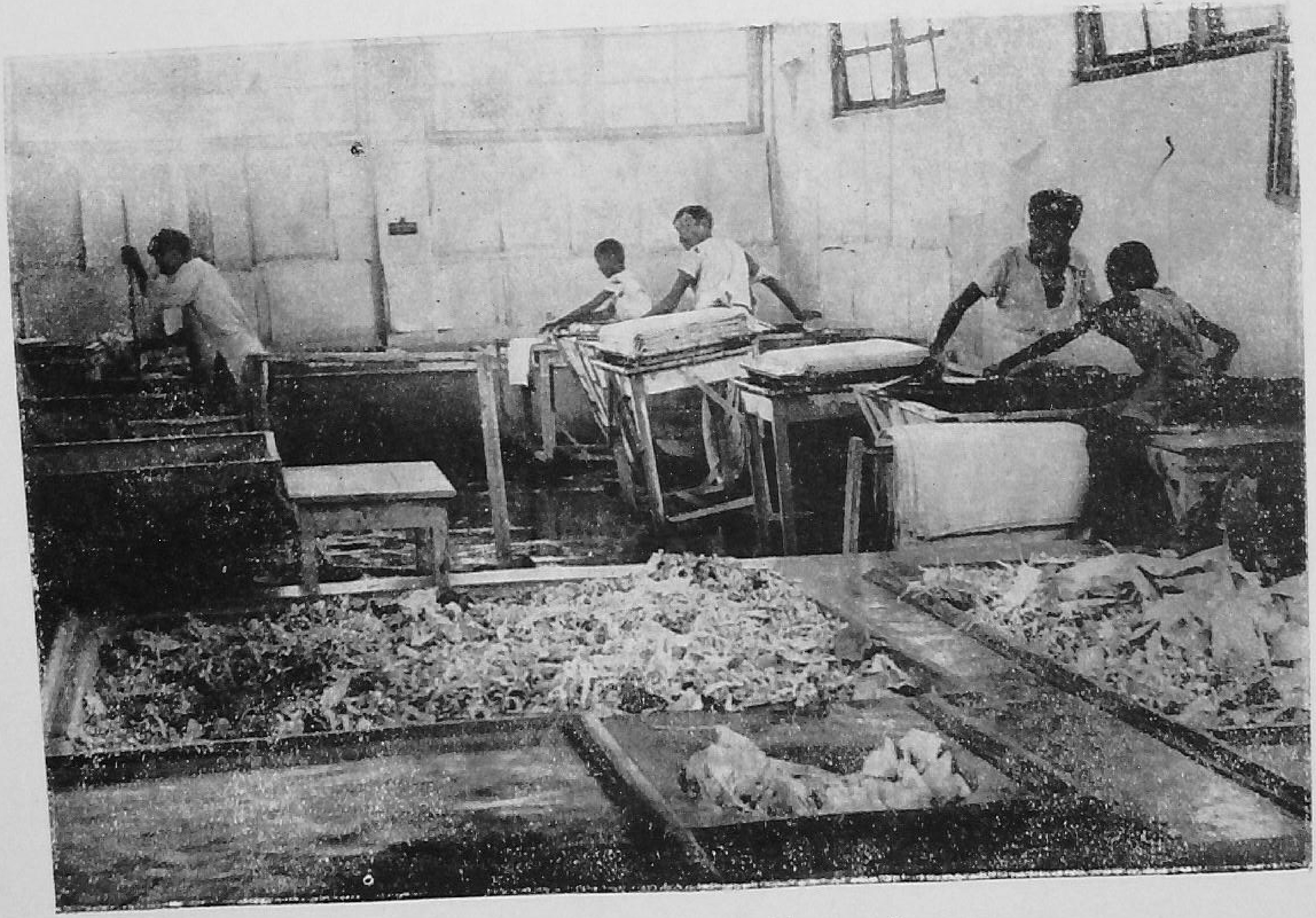


Apiary Department in Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [Times of India

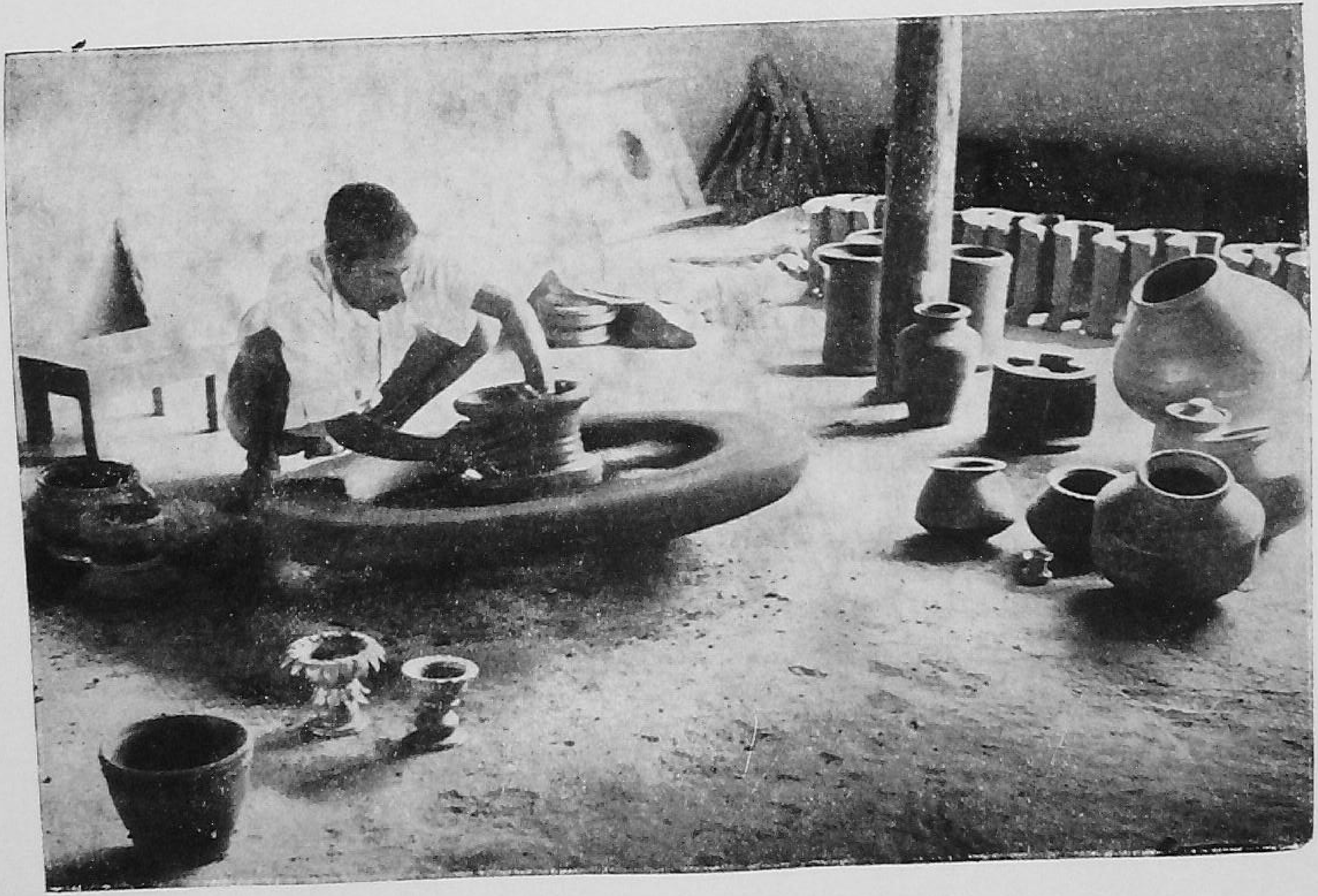
Palm-Gur Department in Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [*Times of India*



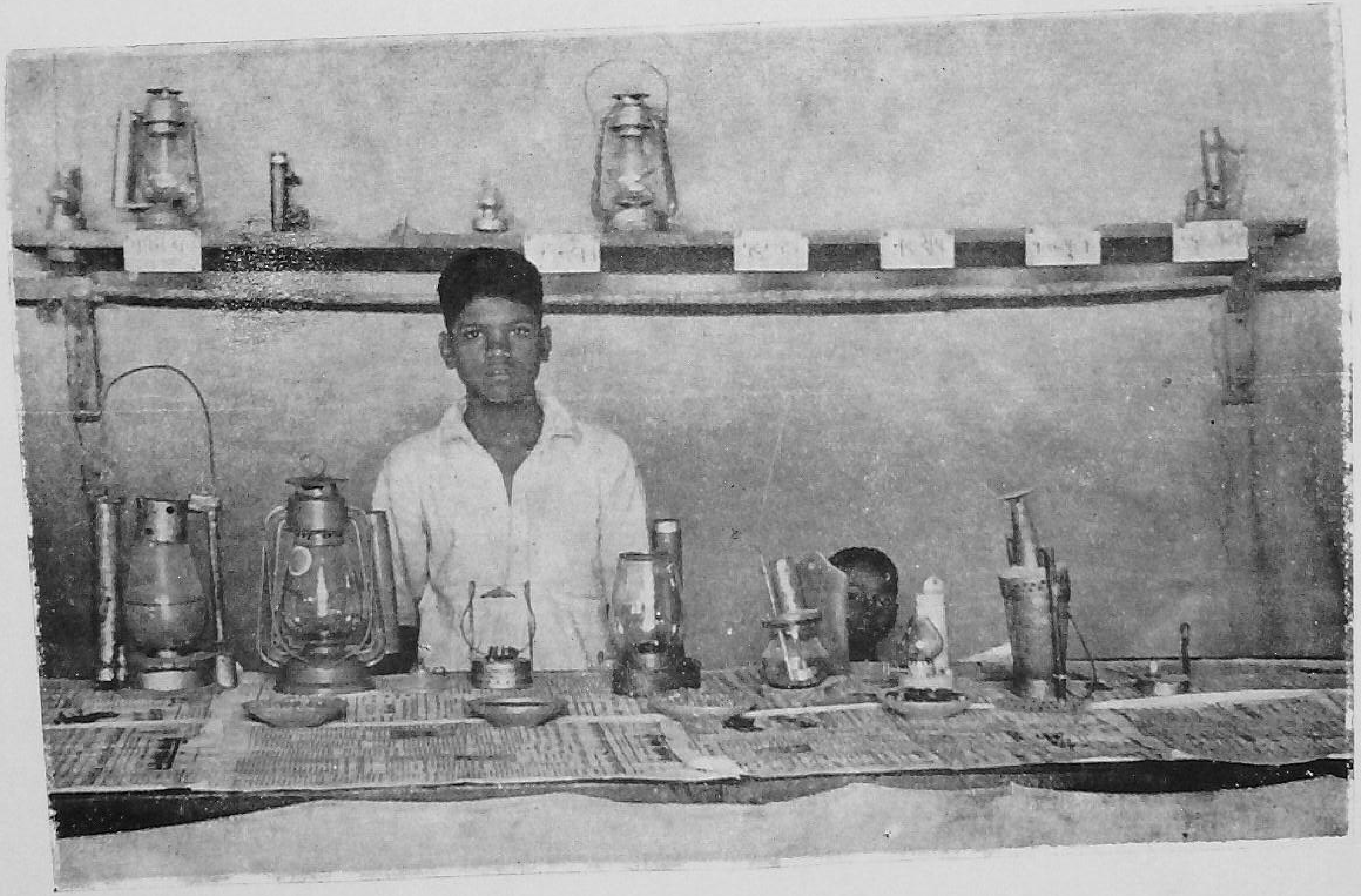
Paper Department in Maganvadi

By *Kind Courtesy*] [*Times of India*



Pottery Department in Maganvadi

By *Kind Courtesy*] [*Times of India*



Magan-Dip Department in Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [Times of India

Village Industries Shop in Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [*Times of India*

Magan Sangrahalaya

(Museum of Village Industries)

[Times of India

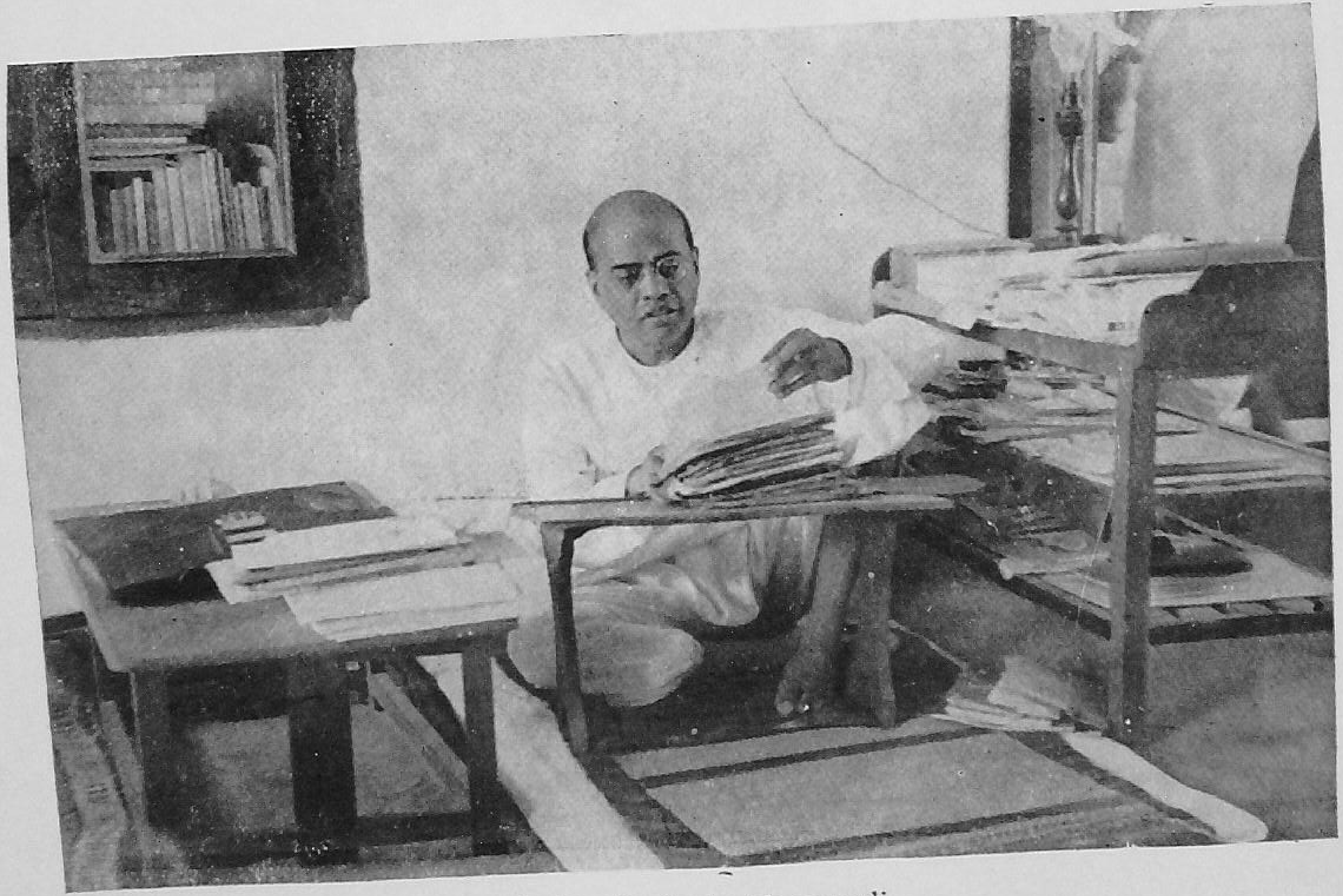
By Kind Courtesy]

Vidyalaya Hostel in Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [Times of India

Kumarappaji in his "Robinson Crusoe" Hut

By Kind Courtesy] [*Times of India*



In his Study in Maganvadi

By Kind Courtesy] [*Times of India*

With Gandhiji at Haripura Congress

With his three Brothers

PART FOUR

LIGHT ON PROBLEMS.

I

THE GREATEST MENACE TO WORLD PEACE

DR. BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

Human history is full of battles and wars. If we are to judge by the present century, battles have swollen into wars and wars into world wars, and world wars have become a permanent feature of our lives. They come so frequently now that one may say that today the world is in a prepetual state of war, when we are either actually engaged in fighting or are getting ready for it. Peace has vanished from this earth.

Moreover modern wars are not merely a matter between armies but engage whole peoples, the civilian population being as much harnessed to the war effort and exposed to death and destruction as the military. Consequently peace means more to us than to previous generations.

(a) PROPOSALS FOR SECURING PEACE

I. An obvious reaction to war is negative, that is' to say, that we would have nothing to do with it. This stated crudely,

is the Pacifist position. If a large number of people refused to fight, war would no doubt be impossible. But the vast majority, though peacefully inclined normally, are prepared to fight when their country is involved in war. Pacifism has, therefore, not succeeded so far in providing an effective answer to war.

2. Another attempt to do away with war is that suggested by Marxism. The idea is to make conditions throughout the world of one pattern, where there will be no profit motive and no exploitation or suppression of man by fellow man. But unfortunately, in seeking to bring about this new order the followers of Marx, in accordance with Marxist theory, use violence to exterminate the old order. Actually, therefore, far from bringing about peace, Communism today functions as an active promoter of war.

3. Still another attempt is to devise political machinery for solving international conflicts peacefully. With this object in view the League of Nations was formed, but it proved futile for the task. A similar effort on a larger scale is that of the United Nations. While it has succeeded in averting war between some smaller nations, one cannot be too optimistic about its capacity to prevent war between the major powers. Instead of being an instrument of peace, actually it is turning out to be a place where nations line up against each other for war. It seems today to be the battle ground of two powerful rivals. Each must crush the other out of existence if it is to have its way. Under such circumstances how can there be any peace? On the other hand, these powers are increasing their stockpiles of atom bombs and secret weapons calculated to wipe out whole peoples. Peace is supposed to come out of such means. We do not know if man in all his long history ever conceived of a madder idea. Elementary knowledge of human nature shows that people will not take defeat lying down. You may supress them today by your greater strength. But sooner or later they are bound to rise and take vengeance. By Satan you cannot cast out Satan. Violence is but the progenitor of greater violence. If America crushes Russia

today, Russia will not rest till she crushes America tomorrow. It is strange that statesmen are so short-sighted that they do not see this elementary truth. The method of settling disputes between nations by negotiation, for which the United Nations exists, is of course the only rational one. But man is evidently still so irrational and the forces that drive him to war are so strong that mere organizational machinery for securing peace proves futile.

(b) CAUSE OF WAR

What then is it that makes man, enlightened in other respects, resort to war in settling international disputes ? It would be simplifying the matter too much to trace it all to one cause. Pride in one's own culture and fear that that culture is being threatened may lead to war. Nominally this is what was at stake during the last two world wars, when the allies were said to be fighting to uphold democracy against totalitarianism. Similarly Pakistan is ready to fight India on the plea of Islam being in danger, and America is brandishing the sword as the champion of freedom against Communist enslavement.

Another source of conflict is nationalism. Every country today is afire with it, each looking with favour on itself and tending to be suspicious and distrustful of every other. Owing to such exclusive love of one's own country nationalism is proving today to be a menace to world peace.

Still another cause of war is greed for power and domination. An Alexander, a Chengis Khan, a Clive, a Napoleon or a Hitler rises to power and is not content till he plants his flag in the remotest corners of the earth. He marches his armies hither and thither causing death and destruction.

In addittion, there are religious wars, as in the Middle Ages, between Christians and Arabs, or Catholics and Protestants, or as in our own day, between Hindus and Muslims. It would be idle, therefore, to ignore all these various causes and to trace war merely to one source.

Nevertheless, one may say that the major cause of war today is economic. Britain came to India attracted by her wealth, and remained in India protected by her army, for economic gain. She fought or kept off several would-be invaders of India, such as France, Portugal, Holland, Russia, Germany or Japan, just to protect her own economic interests in India. Her wars, and fortifications from Gibralter to Singapore, were to protect her trade routes. Germany and Japan fought for *lebensraum* (literally, living space). They were too cramped in their home countries and required to expand into raw-material producing countries. Their growing industries not only required raw materials but also markets. Britain saw in Germany and Japan formidable trade-competitors who had to be nipped in the bud. This, more than democracy and freedom, was really what made her throw her all into the last two world wars. It was for her a fight to death to protect her raw material sources and markets against others. That it was not a case of fighting for democracy against totalitarianism as she made out, is proved by the fact that one of her allies in the last war againt Germany and Japan was Soviet Russia, the very emblem to Britain and U. S. A. of totalitarianism and suppression of freedom. The British people probably fought believing sincerely that they were sacrificing everything to defend democracy and freedom. But as always happens innocent people are deceived by appeals to the highest motives of religion and morality and made to die for the selfishness and greed of a powerful few.

Besides, it is well known that whenever there is unemployment and economic depression, business interests try to plunge their countries in war, for war promotes business of all kinds, and provides good profit and full employment. Lives are lost and wealth is destroyed in war, it is true. But what does it matter so long as A, B and C make their pile through war industries and there are no disgruntled unemployed ?

Further, the armament trade thrives on war. For armament manufacturers peace means bankruptcy. So they are very much concerned to stir up trouble. If there is no war they

must make one by spreading poisonous propaganda, or keep up a threat of war in various parts of the world so that countries will spend vast sums of money on armaments to be prepared for eventualities. It is a sordid game, to produce mis-undestanding and conflict between nations in order thereby to fatten oneself on the manufacture of death-wielding weapons.

Whatever may have been the causes of war in former times, it can, therefore, hardly be disputed that the basic cause of war today is economic. Even apparently, political conflicts as between Soviet Russia and the United States, for example in Korea, Japan, Iran or Germany, spring from economic motives. If the United States loses out in any of these places, it means adding to the economic and therefore military strength of Russia, for the economic resources of these countries become available for whichever of these two powerful rivals has a friendly or controlling influence over them. This primary economic motive is covered up by both claiming to fight for democracy. The United States says that it is fighting for democracy as over against totalitarianism, and Russia claims that she is fighting for democracy as against the oppression and exploitation of the weak under capitalism and imperialism.

Even racial conflicts which exist in various parts of the world, and in its worst form in South Africa, are based essentially on economic motives. The white man in South Africa or Australia or Canada is afraid of economic competition from the Asiatic, be he Indian, Chinese or Japanese. Therefore he is anxious to exclude the Asiatic, as far as possible, from his shores by means of immigration restrictions, discriminatory legislation and social ostracism. The white man's standard of living being high he is afraid that the Asiatic, with a low standard of living, will perform the same service for less and oust him from his position of privilege. Racial conflict has thus at its basis an economic motive. It is not that economic reasons alone account for racial conflicts, but that prejudices which exist in themselves are worsened and intensified owing to economic reasons.

Similarly religious differences there are between Hindu and Muslim. But they were brought to a head chiefly because the Muslims felt that they were economically backward as compared with the Hindus, and would remain so under a predominantly Hindu government in free India. The Muslim demand for partition and its consequent bloodshed in our country was thus but a result of the urge on the part of Muslims for finding economic security for themselves.

It is only natural that this cry for bread and security is basic to human beings and accounts for much of our conflicts. If we are to find a solution to the problem of war we must seek to evolve an economic organization which will cause as little friction as possible between various groups of people and help them all to live together in peace.

(c) INDUSTRIALIZATION AS THE BASIC CAUSE OF MODERN WARS

From the fact that till lately wars were not conducted, as in our day, for the purpose of securing raw materials and markets in distant corners of the earth, we get a clue as to what requires to be done. Till lately, that is, prior to industrialization, each country was economically self-sufficient in regard to its primary requirements and traded only in surplus raw materials and luxury goods. So long as production in a country was based on raw materials obtained locally and was not more than what was required for local consumption, the economic life of the nation was not such as to bring it into conflict with any other. Primarily it lived to itself, and its economic life did not interfere with that of another. But after the Industrial Revolution all this changed. Britain, for example, developed large-scale factory manufactures far beyond her own raw material supply and demand for manufactured goods. She required raw materials like cotton, tobacco, and rubber, which were not locally available, and turned out finished goods which could not all be locally consumed. Therefore, for her industrial wheels to keep

on running she required, on the one hand, an endless supply of raw materials from wherever they could be had and, on the other hand, world markets where the finished goods could be sold.

It is obvious that such an economic system requires for its existence a vast colonial system, where large areas of the world will produce the raw materials needed by the manufacturing country, will not themselves set up factories to turn out finished goods, and will be content to import the needed factory goods from the manufacturing country. As it happens that factory manufacture is much more paying than agriculture, it means that the manufacturing country becomes increasingly prosperous, while the colonial country has to be content with a low standard of living. Naturally such an unequal relationship cannot continue for very long except at the point of the bayonet, for as soon as the colonial country realizes the facts of the position, it does all it can to set up factories of its own and to refuse to take finished goods from abroad. But this is full of evil portents for the manufacturing country, the very basis of whose economic life is thus undermined. The two are thus thrown into violent conflict.

The conflict does not end there. Worse conflict, upsetting the peace of the entire world, arises when other countries also industrialize themselves and threaten the trade of older industrialized countries like Britain. So far as the world goes, the process of industrializing is still in its early beginnings. Britain, a tiny island, held the field without a rival till but yesterday. Now other and larger countries are industrializing themselves, and today the United States and Russia appear as formidable rivals through industrialization, with Britain fading out of the picture. But other countries are not sitting idle. They are also industrializing themselves—Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Soon Asian countries, now throwing off foreign domination, will also be launching on programmes of rapid industrialization. They are huge countries with immense populations. In addition South America and Africa will enter the field before long. If industrialization requires world raw materials and world markets, the prospect of averting conflict

between all these future industrial powers is very small indeed. Let us remember that ·Word Wars I and II were caused when only one or two countries besides Britain took to industrialization. What chance is there of any peace at all when other and more extensive countries with low standards of living and ample mineral resources take with avidity to industrialization in order to improve their standard of living ?

Till now one or two industrialized powers of the West alone monopolized wealth and power. This is not going to be possible hereafter. To say the least, the West will have to be content with less wealth when Asia manufactures for her own needs. The West is not prepared to give up her position of economic advantage without a struggle, as we see happening today in Iran.

Besides, when Asia industrializes herself, she wil also want raw materials like iron, coal, and oil as well as atomic energy producing materials, of all of which there is only a limited supply in the world. This again must lead to growing conflict between countries as more and more of them take to industrialization. Each country will then regard it as a matter of life and death to secure these raw materials. How under the circumstances can war be averted ? Preaching peace or asking them to solve the problem by negotiation and sweet reasonableness will be like expecting hungry dogs not to fight over a single crust of bread.

It is for this reason that it seems that peace can never come so long as the major seed of conflict, viz. Industrialization is left to remain in the economic sphere. What is wrong with industrialization is that in a world which is cut up into several countries with national barriers, it tends to override frontiers and to upset economic equilibrium in them all. Where an economic system is of this kind, which impinges vitally on the economic life of another country or of other countries, war is hard to escape.

(d) THE WAY TO PEACE

It may be thought that in that case, perhaps, the way to peace would be to abolish all national frontiers and to regard the world as one big country. But it will be ages before nations will forget their diverse histories, traditions and cultures, and merge into one, if at all they ever do.

A more practicable solution will be to have a world government where conflicts between nations can be solved in a democratic way. But this again seems a long way off, for even national democracies, with a few hundreds of years of experience are still far from functioning as real democracies. Powerful interests control national governments, so much so that these governments, are democracies only in form and name. How much more difficult would it be to have a truly democratic world government? Under a so called world government the wealthy countries of the world are likely to have it all their own way. Further, so long as industrialization remains, there is bound to be rivalries and clash of interests between countries, as already pointed out; and even under a world government, every country, as now, is apt to think primarily only in terms of its own interests and thus come into conflict with others which oppose it.

If we are anxious for peace the best plan it seems to us, therefore, is to have an economic system which will cause the least friction between nations. Undoubtedly the best way of achieving this is to make each country, as of old, as far as possible economically self-sufficient, its production limited to its own needs, and trade confined to surplus raw materials and to luxury or artistic goods peculiar to the region. This will entail reducing large-scale manufacture to a size just sufficient to meet local needs, or scrapping it altogether. But is this not much better than living always in a state of war and in fear of being wiped out or disabled for life by atom bombs? Why should we be so infatuated by factory production that we should want to have it even at the cost of everything including our lives?

Besides, we noted that racial, religious and other differences between people are enhanced owing to a feeling of economic rivalry and insecurity. For this again decentralized production, organized on a self-sufficient village basis as far as possible, provides a plausible solution. In our villages of old, Hindus and Muslims were bound together by common work for the village, each influencing the other in language, customs, arts and crafts, music and literature, and each joining with the other in observance of festivals. It was a natural evolution arising from people living together in villages. As against this, industrialization, which disrupts such group economic life, leaves people in a state of fear and insecurity and sets them against each other. Even Socialism can function best only under decentralization, where people living in small groups, may be expected to work for the common good of the group and not each just for himself. Where, on the other hand, under industrialization the group becomes as wide as the nation or the world, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the individual to feel any loyalty to it, and hence people will have to be forced against their will to work for the common good. This must inevitably end in violence and a threat to internal peace.

But let it not be thought that doing away with industrialization means a return to primitivism. We may make all the use we can of science, electrical and other such energy, and modern engineering. Let us by all means save men and animals drudgery and hard labour. But let production be for use in the immediate neighbourhood. Let science and technical skill be directed to inventing small machines which will aid the individual to produce easily, speedily and well, but not machines as at present, whose output is so enormous that they can function adequately only by causing distress and unemployment in vast areas of world and lead to a feeling of fear and insecurity among large sections of the people and jealousy and war with other manufacturing countries.

If our contention is sound, it is not too difficult to make the necessary change. It would mean that nations should do

all they can to promote decentralized production, and adopt large-scale centralized manufacture only where it cannot be helped and restrict it merely to meeting their own national needs. It is true that governments, which adopt such a course, will be faced with the opposition of vested interests. But they must be prepared to meet it firmly in the permanent interests of humanity and world peace. In addition, of course, they may work for a world government constituted in such a way as to be able to tackle conflicts between nations justly and peacefully. They may also educate and train their people to be guided by reason and morality and not by brute force. But so long as industrialization remains as at present, to want peace is like a child asking for the moon.

II

NAI TALIM AND THE ECONOMICS OF PEACE

MARJORIE SYKES

I am Not an "Economist"; I take no part in arguments about the gold standard or banking or the national debt; I run the risk of being condemned as one of those fools who rush in, perhaps, where the "experts" fear to tread. Nevertheless I am quite sure that economics is not and must not be merely a preserve of experts; if it is to justify its existence it must serve us ordinary human beings and help to arrange our lives and our livelihood so as to increase contentment and wellbeing. After all, "economy" means simply "management"; economics is the study of our management of the daily business of getting a living. I am grateful to J. C. Kumarappa for many things, but not least for his vivid and telling ways of reminding us that when we talk about economic laws in the abstract, we are really talking about the doings of men and women like ourselves. Economics is concerned with people in one of the major occupations of their lives, upon which a large part of their happiness or misery depends.

Now there are some ways of managing the business of living, both for individuals and communities, which are in the long run more conducive to contentment, prosperity and peace than other economic practices. It strikes me as most interesting and significant that in countries so widely separated and so differently circumstanced as (for example) India, France and the United States of America, economists, who are concerned with the human implications of their science, have come to such closely converging conclusions about the essential principles involved. If we long - and who does not — for some stable peace in the world on which we may build the personal pattern our lives, we ought to learn from these thinkers what the conditions of peace are. "Take what you want" says God in the Spanish proverb. "Take it —and pay for it." Peace can be had for the taking, provided that we will pay the price.

Part of the price is an economic organization based securely on the principles of *Swadeshi;* on the local production of essential goods; on co-operative management of human affairs in communities small enough to give the individual person a sense of significance and responsibility, yet with an out-reach large enough to expand his sympathies and stimulate his mind. A most important part of the price of peace is the acceptance of hard work, the recognition of bodily labour as a good and not an evil, a blessing and not a curse.

Many people, including Kumarappa himself, have said these things, and said them far more competently, convincingly than I can. I am repeating them only in order to lead up to the main thing I have to say : it seems that we as a nation are in danger of making ourselves actually incapable of paying the price of peace, by the type of education which most of us are content to go on giving to our children. Unless the schools and homes together set before the youth of the country the scale of values which peace demands, and show them how to live by it, what hope can we have of peace ?

What becomes, in our schools, of the joy of bodily labour? "A normal child", writes C. E. Montague, "has no spite against work till you have drilled one into him by some form of dis-education. So powerful is this innate craving for labour that it may take all the sources of a great public school and a famous and ancient university to make a boy believe that real work is a thing to flee from, like want or disease." Montague is writing of England, but this same process of dis-education, alas, has gone a very long way in India.

What of the joys of co-operation—of achieving *together* the goal we have set before us; when disasters and failures come, what of the comfort of sharing them together and knowing that we are not alone. Our schools pay lip-service, often, to the value of team work; but how often they turn away to honour in practice the student who succeeds at the expense of his fellows, to leave the week to go to the wall alone, and to encourage, in the actual result, an ugly spirit of jealous competition!

What, above all, of the joy, the confidence, the security that come of being able to produce one's necessities by one's own labour as a member of a free and self reliant society? Our "ignorant" people, fortunately for us, still know something of what that means; but in our school the wisdom and skill of the peasant and artisan are despised, ignored, or treated in dilettante fashion as a hobby or a recreation far removed from the serious business of the school, which is with books and the traditional "educational material" which they contain. The barren futility of our education in books alone is reflected in the futility, the insecurity, the fear which besets an urbanised population, helpless to supply its own life-needs and goaded to panic by any threat to its supplies. Here, in this insecurity and the aggressiveness which comes of it, is the real psychological breeding-ground of all the "wars that nobody wants."

I wish that everyone who reads this would read instead the opening chapters of Herbert Read's *Education for Peace.* Read analyses with clarity and force the two essential characteristics of any educational system which aims at producing truly

peaceful persons. It *must* be an education in co-operative living; it must, equally emphatically, be an education through things, not through mere words. It must, that is to say, bring the child up against hard reality, put him to wrestle with stubborn substance, and face him with the inexorable demand of life that if you want this and this, you *must* do thus and thus, because such is the law of nature. The fact that this analysis is made against a European background and with special reference to the value of art in education, only makes more striking the parallel between Herbert Read's contentions and the principles of the Basic National Education, the *Nai Talim*, which Mahatma Gandhi placed before India as the means to establish the socio-economic order of non-violence.

It is, therefore, no accident that J. C. Kumarappa should have been from its inception a member of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, which concerns itself with the growth of Nai Talim, nor that his interest in its educational work should be so real and continuing. For the whole aim of Nai Talim, the end to which all its programmes of work are directed, is so to educate boys and girls (and men and women too) that they do become progressively more capable of playing their part in a society built on the economics of peace. No one, who is concerned for national and international peace, can afford to neglect the economics of peace; and no one concerned with the practice of the economics of peace can afford to neglect or ignore the influence of education. As Lenin saw long ago, we cannot go on indefinitely trying to build a new society with the men educated in the old. The vicious circle has to be broken, and it can be broken best in the school. That is why every serious prophet of social and economic revolution, becomes sooner or later, a prophet of educational revolution. Because Mahatma Gandhi conceived Sarvodaya, the society of peace, as the life of the India of his dreams, he also conceived *Nai Talim*, Basic Education, as the means of making his dream come true.

The significance of *Nai Talim* for the work of J. C. Kumarappa is simply this, that it sets out through a definite,

well-tested, educational programme, to build up the children of India into men and women with the strength, the knowledge and the will to turn his plans into actualities. They must work hard, produce efficiently, and measure their success by its fruits, they must work together, rule themselves, and freely obey their freely-chosen leaders for their own common good and the good of all. They must understand what they are doing, why they are doing it, what factors, material or psychological, help or hinder, how obstacles can be over-come. In short, they must be educated in real work, not in some sheltered ivory tower. That is what *Nai Talim* is for, and by this test its institutions must stand or fall.

III

SARVODAYA AND COMMUNISM

SURESH RAMABHAI

Writing about the horrible poverty of India, Gandhiji said in 1921 as follows:

"The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has got to be experienced to be realized. I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem—invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn it only by the sweat of their brow."

Thirty years after, today, there is no appreciable change in the 'indescribably painful state.' More than four years have passed since we achieved independence and became our own masters, yet the process of the rich getting richer and the poor poorer continues unabated. Nay, public apathy or the gulf between the rulers and the ruled has terribly grown during these four years, as has

been publicly acknowledged by the Prime Minister himself. But the most shocking blow to the millions has come in the form of a Draft Report of a Five-year Plan of the much vaunted National Planning Commission, which though lamenting the growing population of the country, refused to promise work to the whole people so that they may earn their food by the " sweat of their brow. " There is not a shadow of doubt in it that the present Government, with all its resources and accumulating sterling balances and dollar reserve, cannot provide work to the hungry millions to make their two ends meet. This Government or Swaraj is, therefore, not a Swaraj of the people. Manifestly it cannot be called a democracy of the people. An autocracy of the few rich or powerful "haves" over the millions of the poor "have-nots", as in fact the present democracy is, must needs be changed. It is only after the former are transformed in a decisive struggle between the two that a real democracy of the people can be established in India.

But the question of questions is : who is to represent the have-nots ? A categorical reply to this question is rather difficult to give. Broadly speaking there are two rivals in India to this throne of the kingship of the heart of the people, *viz.*, Sarvodaya and Communism. The former conveys an idea which was put into practice for well over fifty years by Gandhi, who first used the word in the beginning of this century; while the latter is represented by a devoted band of people who are out to smash all walls and seek inspiration from the doctrine of Communism that was preached by Marx in the middle of the last century and has been practised at the instance of Lenin in Russia since 1917 onwards and by Mao-tse in China for the last two years. The very name of Sarvodaya stirs the people as something which is familiar and their own and can actually solve their ills in its simple and marvellous manner. Communism seems to capture the heart of those people who, hopelessly strained by ever-growing miseries, see a ray of hope in a system that has wrought unheard of wonders in Russia and in China. But there is a lot of confusion as to the real contents of these two ideologies of Sarvodaya and Communism.

Even the educated believe that both, driving to the same end, differ only in their emphasis on non-violence, and led by 'scientific' education, some of them go so far as to eulogise the two with the same gusto and assert :

Communism—Violence=Gandhism,

or Communism+Non-violence=Gandhism

It must be stated outright that both of these equations are wrong and misleading. A better, albeit not cent per cent correct, version of the two may be,

Gandhism+Violence = X

or Gandhism—Non-violence= O

It is high time that the truth both about Gandhism (which we have referred to and shall continue to refer as Sarvodaya, for it is impossible to confine the personality of Gandhi to any particular system or ism) and Communism be told for a full grasp of the real picture visualised by them. Also, no misconception prevalent about either of the two should be allowed to linger on.

* * * *

Before dealing with the differences between Sarvodaya and Communism their common points must be duly mentioned.

The external similarity between the two ideologies in the practical sphere is their very deep concern for the under-dog, the poor "have-not" millions. Both of them equally detest the shamefully thick barriers that at present persist between various levels of Society. Gandhi said in 1946 :

"Let no one try to justify the glaring differences between the classes and the masses by saying the former need more. That will be idle sophistry and a travesty of my argument. The contrast between the rich and the poor today is a painful sight."

The position of Marx is very well known in this regard. In one of his early works he wrote :

"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."

By 'change' he meant an overthrow of the feudal aristocracy and over-lordism of the capitalist class by a dictatorship of the peasantry or proletariat.

Next, in the thoretical sphere, both Communism and Sarvodaya regard nature as a 'connected and integrated whole', *i. e.* nature is not idle but in a state of 'continuous movement and change, of continuous renewal and development.' Further, both of them hold that the 'process of development' occurs in the form of an 'onward' and upward movement' which goes 'from the lower to the higher'.

Here at once crops up the basic issue: what is the charactersitic of this "process of development"? The Communist contends:

"The process takes place not as a harmonious unfolding of phenomena, but as a disclosure of the contradictions inherent in things and phenomena, as a struggle of opposite tendencies which operate on the basis of these contradictions."

A believer in Sarvodaya refuses to accept this proposition. The difference can better be explained by a similie. On the Dashera occasion a certain street in the city of Allahabad is decorated and illuminated at night. In the small hours of the morning people gather in their thousands to see it, as also to have a darshan of Rama-Chandraji, very beautifully installed in a bedecked chowki And the crowd there is simply immense. Now suppose a newcomer enters the street and proceeds for darshan. He can reach the main chowki by two processes. Firstly, he may, thinking that all these fellows are inherently obstacles and his enemies determined not to let him have darshan, take a lathi or rifle in his hand and beat or shoot around, come what may, and proceed headlong to his cherished chowki. Secondly, he may, thinking that all these are his fellow men with the same object in view, politely appeal to those on his sides to make way for him, and going at a pace that the huge rush may permit, try to reach his destination without inflicting any blow at all on anybody, minding little if he is himself crushed in his calm pursuit. The Communist subscribes to the former process of movement, while Sarvodaya recognises the latter.

In fact, the entire citadel of Communism is based on the concept of "struggle". They believe that society is composed of classes which, as their interests vitally differ, are out to annihilate each other in order to gain ascendancy and so are involved constantly in a "struggle" for supremacy. Marx says:

"The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society, has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones."

Further Lenin argues:

"And the modern era, the era of the complete victory of the bourgeois, of representative institutions, wide (if not universal) suffrage, a cheap, popular daily press, etc.; the era of powerful and ever-expanding unions of workers and unions of employers, etc., has revealed even more manifestly (though sometimes in a very onesided, "peaceful", "constitutional" form) that the *class struggle is the mainspring of events.*"

A votary of Sarvodaya does not hold class struggle responsible for one and all events. He believes that there is a very genuine harmony behind all events which are but manifold manifestations of one eternal unity. What that unity is, we shall come to shortly. Here it must be stated that this harmony is like that between the diverse tunes of a Veena. Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, etc., are all different tunes to reckon with. But there is no struggle between them for domination: they supplement each other to produce the moving note that enraptures an audience. So also, according to Sarvodaya, every group in this universe has a tune of its own that goes to contribute to the music sublime.

Then comes the second question which is rather a corollary to the first: "What is the basis of the process of development"? What is there at the root? The clear answer of Gandhi is:

"I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is everchanging, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates dissolves and recreates. That informing power or spirit is God. And

since nothing else I see merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone is.

And Marx's is as unequivocal :

"With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought."

This is the acme of the difference between the ideologies of the two. What is real, rational and vital to one is false, irrational and anathema to the other. The Communists attach primary importance to matter which, they say, gives birth to, sustains and dissolves life, and which was there when life was conspicuously absent. Little wonder that God or Truth, the eternal unity referred to above, which is fundamental for one is ruled out by the other.

With their inordinate faith in matter, it is but natural for Communists to see appearance as reality. As Engels put it :

"The unity of the world does not consist in its being...The real unity of the world consists in its materiality, and this is proved ..by a long and tedious development of philosophy and natural science..."

Further, he clarifies :

"...But if the...question is raised : what then are thought and consciousness, and whence they come, it becomes apparent that they are products of the human brain and that man himself is a product of nature, which has been developed in and along with its environment; whence it is self-evident that the products of the human brain, being in the last analysis also products of nature, do not contradict the rest of nature but are in correspondence with it."

From this naturally follows the doctrinaire gospel called Dialectical Materialism where from springs the corollary known as determinism in Marxian philosophy. It presupposes the progress and passage of man through certain definite phases, which will culminate in the dictatorship of the proletariat or 'people's democracy'.

It has been notified above that Marx postulated his theory about the 'economic law of motion of modern society' in

the nineteenth century. A follower as he was of Feuerbach, a determined materialist who had, to quote Lenin, " resolutely broken away from Hegelian idealism " of the preceeding eighteenth century. Marx's materialist stand is quite intelligible. Moreover, it was in keeping with the resounding call of the nineteenth century Europe which was drunk with power and felt intoxicated at the sway it commanded over all it surveyed. Coal, replaced by steam, later succeeded by electricity, was the motive power of industry and business that, helped Europe rule the waves and all. Almost simultaneously with Marx, Darwin discovered what may be described as the 'biological law of motion of modern society' and showed in his 'ORIGIN OF SPECIES' that the advent of man was but the consummation of a "struggle", which he termed as the 'survival of the fittest." In Physics, Newton's dynamics held the day and the "atom" of Chemistry was regarded as "indestructible", but all vegetable matter as inert and lifeless. But with the close of the nineteenth century and the dawn of the twentieth, science rediscovered itself. Curies broke up the atom, Jagdish Bose identified life in plants and Einstein sprang surprise by his Relativity. Thus "natural science" which served as a hand-maid to Engels "real unity of the world" had turned rebel and the we-know-all-about-it-universe of the nineteenth century rendered into, as Jeans put it, the 'Mysterious Universe'. It is interesting to recall that almost at the same time when the verities of natural science were breaking and cracking up in the very laboratories where they reigned supreme, Tolstoy and Gandhi rediscovered for humanity its real economic laws which can be summed up in the two statements 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' and 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread', declaring therein that non-violence is the law of our species as violence is that of the brute. These two laws connote the substance of Sarvodaya.

The foregoing brief discussion clearly shows what a world of difference there is between Sarvodaya and Communism from the theoretical point of view. Now we shall disclose that the situation is as hopeless in the practical domain.

For the sake of argument let the Sarvodaya-votary agree to the Communistic stand that the march of progress in a definite order is pre-determined. Suppose both he and the Communist consent to work to reach the determined destination, and come into the open therefor. But at the very first step the two seem to diverge in two different directions. To the Sarvodaya-votary all steps to his destination are sub-destinations in themselves, each leading to the next, and not obstacles which stand in between the starting point and the final point. The Communist attempts to reach his goal by wiping out one obstacle after the other. On the contrary, the votary of Sarvodaya in the very first stage of his journey, refuses to crush or kill or wipe out what comes in his way to reach his first sub-destination, let apart the final. Knowing that all life is one, he is scrupulous enough not to injure or harm anybody. He can proceed only to the extent to which he can without inflicting injury at all. He will suffer every trouble but would not even harbour the idea of hurting any one, much less actually do it. Believing as he does in the eternal Unity called Truth or Satya he will stick to it at all cost. Or, in Gandhi's terminology, he will proceed as a Satyagrahi who insists on Satya or Truth and with God as his constant witness. In other words, one devoted to Sarvodaya or the Satyagrahi insists on the purity of means to reach any end whatsoever, while the Communist, ridiculing it, tries to go like an arrow straight to its target piercing through everything in the way. For the Communist, all is fair in love and war. For the Satyagrahi, only what is fair is fair in love as also in war. To return to the similie above, whereas the Communist believes in crushing all that intervenes between him and his goal, the Satyagrahi proceeds to his object steadfastly with a feeling of love towards all and doing wrong to none, worrying little whether he is himself crushed out in the endeavour. The vital connection, for a Satyagrahi, between the means and the end, can best be described in the following words of Gandhi:

"The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between

the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree."

It is a thing on which there is no question of any compromise at all. To quote Gandhi again :

"They Say, 'means are after all means.' I would say, 'means are after all everything.' As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between the means and the end. Indeed the Creator has given us control (and that too very limited) over means, none over the end. Realization of goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception."

Thus the variation in the modes of the two is clear cut. And as the Communists feel the urge only to arrive at their destination, the dictatorship of the proletariat, they welcome and count on every instrument or force as can help them to do so. Hence, their full-blooded faith in using "forcible means", This faith necessitates their reliance on big industries, mechanisation and centralisation, of course, under State auspices. On the contrary, the Satyagrahi is definitely opposed to violence. His armoury, therefore, is bereft of any weapon save the strength of his own soul. Quite naturally his paraphernalia appears to be smaller. He does his own work himself, depending on others as little as he can. Besides, he constantly feels that everything under the sun, his own body not excluded, is not really his but His. It is a sort of trust that has been given to him by Him, for upkeep and safe custody in order to serve others. Hence a Satyagrahi is guided in his daily life by the three principles known as "Varna Dharma," "trusteeship" and "decentralisation." A word about each of these will not be out of place.

"The meaning of Varna," says Gandhi, "is incredibly simple. It simply means the following on the part of us all of the hereditary and traditional calling of our forefathers, in so far as the traditional calling is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics, and this only for the purpose of earning one's livelihood. As regards "trusteeship", he held that everything belonged to

God and was from God. Therefore the world and all in it were for His people as a whole, not for a particular individual, or group. When an individual had more than his proportionate share he become a trustee of that portion for the people. And "decentralisation" is a simple term meaning intelligent non-centralisation. It applies equally to production, preservation and distribution of every variety of goods or wealth. Needless to add that these three principles of Varna Dharma, trusteeship and decentralisation appear to the Communists as orthodox superstitions, if not a kind of hoax, to hoodwink the ignorant. Their very sound repels them. That only exposes again the deep irreconcilability of Sarvodaya and Communism.

* * * *

There is another difference. As said earlier serious Communists in their eagerness to attain their goal, employ all sorts of means. Most important of these are 'economic' means. They employ money and money values ruthlessly. Hence their inevitable reliance on money. Thus though the Communists intend to root out Capitalism, their attachment to money is no less than that of the Capitalist. To a Satyagrahi, therefore, Capitalism and Communism are different forms of the same clay called money. It is but natural. For, in the Communist laboratory the crucible of force or violence can stand only on a tripod which has hatred or destruction, money or capital, and centralisation or dictatorship for its legs. Both Communism and Capitalism depend equally on these three legs. The doctrinaire philosophers of both may try to distinguish between each other but a Satyagrahi, however, is wont to agree with Kabir who says:

"A study of books and treatises does not make one learned. Learned is really he who has mastered the single word *love*"

The lesson of love or prem is the only reliable and abiding lesson worth study. Call it love or non-violence, hatred and lure of money and dictatorship cannot secure any corner here. Thus brushing all 'isms' based on brute force or violence, Sarvodaya points the way to a new world of peace and justice.

Apart from violence, we find that even at its best, the field that Communism seeks to cover is much narrower than that of Sarvodaya. A true votary of Sarvodaya must observe eleven vows in his personal life, i. e. those of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, continence, non-amassing, bodily-labour, control of palate, fearlessness, equal regard for all religions, swadeshi and touchableness. Out of these eleven, the Communist goes whole-hog with only one, i. e., non-amassing. For the rest, his attitude can be summarised like this. As regards truth he, as we have seen, does not believe in it. Without violence he cannot move an inch. Non-stealing and bodily labour he appreciates, but is not particular about them. Celibacy is meaningless for him as also control of palate. Fearlessness he needs and the three remaining are reactionary. The undiluted emphasis of Communists is only on non-amassing or abolition of private property. They unfortunately do not realise that complete non-amassing is impossible without complete surrender to our Maker and that employing of even an iota of violence will detract them from attaining this ideal: whereas it is the faith of the Satyagrahi that even his physical body is not entirely his own but only an instrument in the hand of God for the service of humanity. Thus what Communism, even if it were to rise to its best, aspires to achieve in the economic sphere, Sarvodaya seeks to incorporate in each and every sphere of life, physical, economic, social, moral, spiritual or any other. It works, as it were, to abolish even the self, to merge the part into the whole, the Atman into the Parmatman and as Gandhi said, by reducing ourselves to zero. Again, a language unintelligible to the Communists!

It now clearly follows that of the four equations given, the first two have no foundation and the third is absurd while the fourth is only partly true. For the whole of Sarvodaya cannot be equated to non-violence alone. After all, non-violence is not the end in itself. It is but a means to an end, i. e. realisation of Truth or Satya that is God.

Thus we now have an idea of the gulf that separates Sarvodaya and Communism. It appears Heaven and Earth

may meet but this twin cannot. We may better sum up the position in Gandhi's own words:

"Socialism and Communism of the West are based on certain conceptions which are fundamentally different from ours. One such conception is their belief in the essential selfishness of human nature. I do not subscribe to it, for, I know that the essential difference between man and the brute is, that the former can respond to the call of the spirit in him, can rise superior to the passions that he owns in common with the brute and, therefore, superior to selfishness and violence, which belong to brute nature and not to the immortal spirit of man."

* * * *

In the above analysis we get a concise picture of the two great ideologies, as also of their fundamental differences. Their success depends on the sincerity and tenacity of their adherents. There is no doubt about it that, the idea of Sarvodaya is native to India's genius. There are many devotees at its shrine today. Of the various political parties in the field, almost all of them claim to be adherents of Sarvodaya. The Government in office, the Congress party, the Kisan-Mazdur-Praja Party, the Socialist Party, the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, the Ram Rajya Parishad, etc. all loudly assert their belief in Sarvodaya. And loudest of all is the Government, whose leaders every now and then declare their steadfast adherence to the principles of the Father of the Nation! Perhaps all the parties are using Sarvodaya as a smoke-screen only. But these tactics will not be of much avail. As Sri Kishorlal Mashruwala wrote in his recent book 'Gandhi And Marx,'

"Communism is bound to come, unless the Gandhian way of life is actually and actively adopted. It is bound to come, because it is the only way left for the leader-forsaken, half-awakened, desperate masses to protest against the chaos and anarchy ruling in the name of democracy and orderly progress."

We can ignore this forecast only at our peril. In fact, more than fifteen years ago Gandhi said:

"The contrast between the palaces of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor, labouring class cannot last one day in a free India in which the poor will enjoy the same power as the richest in the land. A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good."

It is incumbent on those the believe in Sarvodaya to stem the tide of Communism, nip the evil of violent and bloody revolution in the bud and make the "poorest in India enjoy the same power as the richest". They have to march as the soldiers of the Grand Army, to establish a non-violent democracy of the Indian people, which, as Kumarappa called it, a Government of the villagers, by the villagers and for the villagers.

But what are the preparations for this battle for democracy on the Sarvodaya front? At present they are few and far between. But they are there. And the most conspicuous soldier is none else than Acharya Vinoba Bhave, who has launched his 'Bhoomi-dan' movement. His is the mission to build up a new mind and out-look by converting the hearts of those who have more land than they need. Once the proper atmosphere is created the rest may well follow.

IV

CONTROL - IS IT NEEDED ?

P. C. GHOSH

A System of controls becomes necessary in a country when there is shortage in the supply of essential goods: but it is primarily meant to equalize distribution and to check undue rises in prices. Such a system of controls may benefit the general consumer, especially the poor. In evaluating the utility of a particular system of controls, we should therefore bear these essential considerations in mind. Let us then examine the system of controls prevalent in India to-day. Let us first see whether it tends to equalize distribution. Judging by this standard it may be asserted without any fear of contradiction that the control system in India has completely failed. It is faulty both in planning and in execution. In India, only the cereals are controlled and that too mostly only in urban areas. The amount of cereals allotted to each adult other than a manual labourer has varied from 9 to 12 ounces, according to the amount at the disposal of the Government. Speaking from a scientific point of view, this quantity is not at

all enough for an average man doing moderate work, unless he can have plenty of other vital and necessary food stuffs like milk, butter, fish, meat, eggs, vegetables and fruits with which to supplement his ration of cereals. Unfortunately these things are not within the reach of the poor. Therefore, they are condemned to under-nourishment, whereas the rich find it easy to obtain additional nourishment from costly unrationed articles. Moreover, in towns, a rich man can go to hotels and can take his meals there without having to produce his ration card and getting the number of meals taken recorded therein, to enable the ration shop to make a proportionate reduction in his weekly rations. So when a rich man finds that he is running short of cereals at home, he can easily go to a hotel which a poor man can ill afford to do. Thus it is the poor man who is adversely affected by the present system of controls. It is a natural instinct of man to desire sufficient food. We can ask people to take less for a short time. Then too, if all were to suffer equally, there would be the satisfaction that suffering was inevitable and that there was no descrimination or inequality involved. But to ask only the poorer section of the people to live in a state of continued mal-nutrition, and to hope for response from them, is to show a complete lack of understanding of human nature. Under the present circumstances, when it is almost impossible to equalize suffering, those who suffer take recourse to either of the two things :—

1. Securing a spurious ration card or
2. Purchasing cereals from the black market.

This does not mean that the richer section does not take recourse to either of these devices. They also go to the black market even as the poor people do. Some of them go to the black market in search of articles of better quality which they are accustomed to take but which are hardly available in the ration shops. Spurious cards and black marketing have therefore led to widespread corruption and all its attendant evils. In the world, one may say, nothing is an unmixed evil. So sometimes we are asked to ignore this corruption. One can afford to tolerate

corruption to a small extent but no country can afford to ignore corruption on a large scale. It can only do so at its peril. Such corruption devitalises the nation more than mal-nutrition. The question then should be decided by taking into consideration the balance of advantage as far as a nation is concerned. From that point of view it would be highly advisable to abolish the control system unless we find out an effective and practical way of checking the corruption that it has brought in its trail. I had an opportunity to see the system of administration from within* and I have been seeing it from without. I can say without meaning any disrespect to any particular individual that, with our present administrative machinery it is impossible to run the control system in a proper manner and to stop widespread corruption.

Now let us take the question of the reasonable price. In the State of West Bengal about 25% of the people are under statutory rationing and it is confined practically to the urban areas. Modified rationing is introduced in certain urban or rural areas only when a hue and cry is raised by the people and that also in a very half-hearted manner. The minimum price of rice in the rationed area is Rs. 16-14-0 per maund ; whereas the average price of rice according to the Government calculation in West Bengal is Rs. 30-6-0 per maund. The non-official figure is much higher. So, millions of consumers, especially inthe deficit areas, are to procure rice at more than twice the minimum rate at which it is supplied to the people under statutory rationing. No one can say that, people in the urban areas where the cereals are rationed are poorer, than the rural people. The contrary is probably true. So by this standard too the control system has failed to serve the poorest.

Whenever the question of control is discussed, immediately the theoretical proposition, as to whether in a planned economy there is room for control or not, is raised. No body denies the necessity of control in a planned economy. It is essential for India to have a planned economy; so it is essential also to

* *The writer was some time Chief Minister of W. Bengal.*

have control, they argue. They may be logically incontrovertible once their premises are accepted, but they are fundamentally inconsistent. They must realise that in-effective control is worse than de-control. We are not against, and no sensible people can be against, a system of controls in a planned economy. But the control we have in India today is for all practical purposes nugatory and has produced chaos with consequent wide-spread discontent.

It is often said that if the existing controls, ineffective as they may be, are removed, there would be greater chaos and greater suffering for the people. It is worthwhile to examine this point. We have already said that in West Bengal 25% of the people are under statutory rationing. But even in this rationed area, 95% of the people procure their additional requirements either through spurious ration cards or by purchasing in the black market, which itself is fairly open. A very large number of spurious ration cards were found in Delhi too. So, control, in the sense in which the word is generally understood, really does not exist. It only exists in the brain of some administrators. If we emulate the proverbial ostrich that hides its head under the sands and refuses to recognise the storm that rages in the desert, and shut our eyes and think that everything is all right, then the people will simply laugh at us. I would, therefore, beg all academicians to be a little more realistic. One may argue that if there is decontrol, the hoarders and merchants may try to fatten themselves at the cost of the common people and that there may be large scale starvation and death. But if the Government becomes stern and wants to have its writ honoured, then in this matter, they will have the support of the people, and the rich will dare not do anything, and even if they do so, a drastic measure of the Government can easily cope with the situation. If such acts of the rich are declared subversive and treason against the State and a lot of them are put behind the bars for their misdeeds, then few would dare follow in their wake. It is the softness which the Government is exhibiting in dealing with these anti-social elements which is responsible to a great extent for the present chaos.

Another question has also been raised—should we or should we not procure food stuffs from other countries so long as we cannot produce what we need in sufficient quantity in our country. The only answer to that is that we must procure food stuffs from abroad. But such procurement must be made at the Governmental level, and the Government, after importing into the country, may simply pass them on to different grain shops at a fixed rate so that, the shops may sell them to the consumers at the rate fixed by the Government. It is time that we plan boldly and execute our plans with courage. We must lay great stress on increased production of essential goods like food, and while considering the question of food, we must not only think in terms of cereals, but also in terms of a balanced diet. I often hear the cry from high quarters, "Miss cereals once a week" or "You must change your habits of diet". I have no objection to any kind of diet provided they can give sufficient amount of calories, protein, fats, mineral salts and vitamins at reasonable cost. But up till now the people who have been shouting these slogans have not given us any definite picture of a new diet which makes up for the nutritive and calorific value of the cereals missed. So it is as yet only a sentimental cry and not a scientific alternative. It can appeal to a few faddists and the hypochondriac sons and daughters of rich men, who can afford to indulge in all sorts of dietetic experiments irrespective of the costs involved. And even in the case of these faddists I would respectfully urge them to remember that the human stomach is not a test-tube. In dealing with scientific problems one must proceed in a scientific manner. It is said that the country has a deficit of only 10% in food. Considering the present poor yield of our land it would be a bad compliment to our Ministry of Agriculture if they cannot increase the yield by at least 33% within the next 5 years.

We want to be self- sufficient in cereals, cotton and jute. It is a laudable object, but if we cannot be self-sufficient n all the three, we must think in terms of priority and it goes without saying that priority should be given to food grains. We

cannot perpetually depend on food stuffs coming from other countries. If we do so, we shall have to mortgage our freedom some day. It is clear therefore that the sooner we make ourselves self-sufficient in food grains, the better it will be for us.

I now come to another essential article, cloth. There is an acute dearth of clothing in the country especially in the rural areas. But inspite of this shortage in 1950, we have exported about 35% of the cloth in addition to 24% of the yarn produced. The price of cloth at present is beyond the reach of the common man. So, judging by the standard of equi-distribution and reasonable prices, cloth control has failed and failed miserably. It is no good denying the fact that it is due to the inefficiency aud corruption of the Governmental machinery on the one hand and the inordinate greed of the textile magnates on the other. The Government want to control, but they have not the courage to take steps to make their control effective and successful. The result is all-round chaos.

I have dealt with these principal items at length because they affect everybody very vitally. This does not mean that other items of control also do not affect the people. I know for instance, that the control over iron has adversely affected the cultivators. Now, what remains to be answered is whether all-round decontrol will be an effective solution of our problems. I know that decontrol has its risks, but considering all aspects and the balance of advantage, it would be advisable to decontrol rather than continue the present ineffective control, which is bringing the nation to moral ruin and the whole Governmental machinery to a collapse. If a nation cuts itself away from its moral moorings it is bound to disintegrate. It would be a tragedy of the first magnitude if we allow that to happen to India.

V

WILL THE WEST RESPOND ?

RICHARD GREGG.

I must answer the two questions put to me by G. Ramachandran. His first question is if America and the West will accept Gandhiji's message. His second question is if I think another World War is inevitable.

I wish I could say 'Yes' in answer to the first question. But I am afraid I cannot do so. I can speak best about America. There is a difference between Europe and America. Europe suffered terribly in the last two wars. America did not. When people suffer greatly, they are more sensitive to moral and spiritual ideas. They are then more apt to change their ways than when they are rich and powerful. America is very rich and very powerful. America threfore is not likely to change its ways. America has a great store of raw materials and tremendous energy. There is also the American peoples' national character. America has made greater progress in technology and in science than most other nations. Modern industrial technology in America

is indeed most wonderful. During the last war immense changes and developments took place in American Industry. The productivity of American Industry is now twice as great as it was a few years ago. The amount of automatic machinery is stupendous. You might think that should make every one happy in being able to have so much materials available. It was in Shantiniketan that I heard of one of the sayings of the 'bauls' of Bengal. It is that, when the wind is very strong the boat requires a very strong rudder. That is the trouble in the West today. The vast power of the coal, oil, and hydraulic plants is like a very strong wind on the sails of the West, which has lost its rudder and is unable to find the right direction. In America and in Europe the people are so fascinated with all their technology and science that they have got drunk with them.

For hundreds of years the West has been pre-occupied with the study of the external world. All the mighty forces in the phenomena of the world outside man have fascinated the people. But there is another world. That is the inner world of the spirit. There are only twenty four hours to a day. If you are taken up with the study of the external world- all the twenty four hours you cannot study the other world. The inner world has become less and less real before the external world. It is true that there are many churches and there are many people who go to the churches and go through all the forms of religion. But those who believe that the spirit is completely rea are now very few. If you do not know the Source of life and if you do not know what comes after the experiences of this earthly life, then you do not get the right sense of direction. Let me be a little more concrete. There have been many civilisations in the history of the world. It is interesting to know how most of them succeeded in creating deserts on the earth. Persia was once a great empire, but part of it is now desert land. In the Gobi desert they now pick up the remains of great cities and of a great civilisation. Greece was once a great power and her armies came into India. The Greek's soil is now very badly

eroded and Greeks are now a poor people in the world. North Africa was once the granary of the Roman Empire. It is now largely a desert. To come to modern times, soil scientists now recognise that more ploughable and tillable soil has been washed into the ocean in the last two hundred and fifty years than ever before in the entire history of the world. Since the United States came into existence we have lost a good part of its total ploughable land which has been washed into the ocean. Under the desire for money profit, great forest areas are being destroyed in the United States far more rapidly than they can be replaced. One Sunday edition of the 'New York Times' requires ten acres of tall trees to make the paper for it. There are many papers in the United States which require an equal amount. Most of these papers give a great deal of space for advertisements only. All life, not only human life but animal life, depends upon the top soil that is only four to five inches deep. Blinded by the desire for profit America is destroying this very foundation of life. Something like this is going on all over the world. Along with the vast soil erosion taking place there is at the same time a great increase in population. Agricultural experts now say that there is only less than two acres per person available in the world which can grow food. With continual erosion of the soil and the continual increase of population, the world is moving to the brink of starvation. The West is leading in this gigantic folly.

Besides this there is the recurrence of wars. Wars have been caused by various reasons at different times. But most wars were for the sake of more power or more security. America has a vast industrial establishment which turns out far more than it can consume. The only consumer that can buy up any considerable quantity of output is the Government. The Government wants things that can be used in war. The people in control of this vast industrial establishment are faced with a great dilemma. If they go on piling up weapons for Government there is the danger of war. The Government not only builds up its own war machine but sells weapons of all kinds to European nations

threatened by Russia. America and Western Europe are afraid Communism will upset their social and economic structure. If the industrial leaders in the U. S. A. on the other hand slow down their machines of production, stopping the wheel going round, there will be vast unemployment. That again will bring the danger of Communism nearer. So here is the dilemma. Shall we have unemployment and Communism at home or shall we face war ? If we were wise we could give away what is produced on a great mass scale. We could provide it free for the people just like air and water. But the possession of immense power destroys and injures peoples' imagination, their generosity and wisdom. Therefore when we think of the highly technical and scientific West, specially America, we must remember this other side of the picture. That side of the picture is making the deserts, laying the foundation for mass starvation and for another far more destructive war than the last. The physicians in the war, before they begin their work, are required to take an oath that, they will always practice their skill only for alleviating human suffering. But other kinds of scientists, chemists and people who are in atomic research have not to take any such oath. When this is pointed out, they say that those who work on the atom bomb have no such responsibility. They say their sole duty is to develop the knowledge of nature. It is for the politicians and other people in power to decide how this knowledge is to be used. I believe that these scientists also are responsible for what might happen. This sort of thing illustrates some of the difficulties that come when people no longer believe in the reality of the spirit.

If you ask me, if Gandhiji's message of the spinning wheel, village industries and non-violence will touch the hearts of the people in the West, I can only say it might stir the hearts of some of the people in Europe who have suffered greatly. They are the common people, not the men of industry, finance or political power. We know "Power tends to corrupt". That tendency is very strong and most men are weak. We know what then will be the result. While a good many people in America under-

stand and appreciate the great moral power that came from Gandhiji, his message of the spinning wheel and village industries is not understood at all. They are so over-powered by their attitude to machinery and technology that they are apt to think such things as nonsense. If a young man inherits great wealth and then begins to throw away all his capital by buying all kinds of fancy things, he will be called a spendthrift and considered very unwise. If he is wise he will live on the annual income of his estate. Now the annual income of energy in this world comes to us from the sun. The sun has during many thousands of years stored up in the earth energy, in the form of coal and oil. America is now using up far more petrol than it can obtain from within it and it is buying petrol from outside all the time. She is fast using up her iron ores and coal deposits. So America, for all its power and looking so very impressive, is really fast wasting her capital energy.

Now let me answer the second question, if I think another world war is inevitable, I may be wrong, but I fear that, another world war will come. If it comes, it will be the end of Western civilization. When people tell me that, I am a pessimist in saying that we are nearing another world war, I feel sure I am not a pessimist. If I think that the Governments and the peoples of the world can go on lying, cheating, stealing, exploiting and murdering in the way they have been doing for a long time without paying a heavy price for it, then indeed I will be a pessimist. If I say they could do such things without paying the price for it, that would be equal to saying there is no moral law and no God. That would be pessimism. But when I say that, if we do evil we will reap evil and that the only way out is to do good, then I think I am an optimist. When I affirm my faith in the moral law I cannot be a pessimist.

The Constructive Programme is Gandhiji's plan to build a non-violent society. Satyagraha is used chiefly to overcome the obstacles in the way of building such a society. Both these will be needed. Constructive Workers in India are not too many

and they are scattered all over the country. Let them not be discouraged because they are not many yet. Society is like the human body. People who are working hard for a better world are like the hormones in the body. The hormones are the secretions of what are called the ductless glands in the body. The secretions are put into the blood stream in infinitely small quantities. But they control human growth, health and the human mind. Each Constructive Worker is like a hormone. Each true Constructive Worker is the truth, the unity and the love of the whole human spirit. Truth governs the world and those who stand by the truth will be the guides of the world. Truth alone will prevail. May the blessings of God be with all those who silently do their part in the fulfilment of the Constructive Programme given by Gandhiji.

VI

THE STATE AND COTTAGE INDUSTRIES.

VAIKUNTH L MEHTA

"The State in a free society," writes J. Middleton Murry, "is a new kind of State, of which it can be truly said that the State is the citizens themselves." In modern times, the conception of the State has changed its content, and the word "State" has taken to itself new and diverse connotations. So tremendously have grown the authority and functions of the State, that, writing of conditions in the United Kingdom over half a century ago, G. Bernard Shaw observed that a State could not become a social, that is a truly, democratic State unless it had in every centre of population a local governing body as thoroughly democratic in its constitution as the Central Parliament. That observation refers to the State, mainly in its political aspects. The influence of the State in economic life is, among modern communities, as great as it is in the political field. That is why, for the achievement of its social purpose, new techniques have to be discovered, if democracy is to be preserved. Hence it is that Prof.

G. D. H. Cole, a Fabian successor to Shaw, writing more than half a century after the publication of the original fabian essays, asserts that in these days of huge States and huge-scale production, there is no way of ensuring economic democracy except upon a foundation of small neighbourhood groups, territorial and economic, because such groups alone have in them the essential qualities of unmediated direct democracy, based on personal contact and discussion and on close mutual knowledge and community of small-scale, immediate problems.

2. Having achieved political emancipation and adopted a Constitution which is democratic in structure, the next step for us is to ensure that, in the economic sphere, the pattern is not that of capitalist industrialism where the authority is concentrated in individual capitalists or in the State as a capitalist. That would be the road to serfdom—to the unfolding of the servile State. In order that democracy may have scope to develop, the Constitution hence enjoins that the ownership and control of the material resources of the country should be so distributed as to subserve the common good and that the operation of the economic system should not result in the concentration of wealth and of the means of production in a manner detrimental to the public good. The economic policy of the State should be so moulded as to make effective provision for securing the right to work, and, withal, of ensuring for the citizens the right to adequate means of livelihood. It is true that the Constitution does not prescribe any rigid economic or social frame work, but leaves it to those entrusted with the charge of the Nations' affairs to provide the requisite economic and social pattern.

3. That responsibility Government have entrusted to the Planning Commission. It is not the purpose of this article to review in detail, the draft outline of the First Five Year Plan prepared by the Planning Commission. But in as much as it is intended to deal with the role of cottage industries in national economic planning, it will be pertinent to take note of the approach of the Planning Commission in this matter and to indicate in what respects

the outline could, suitably, be modified or amplified. On one basic fact, the Planning Commission lays much emphasis at the very outset of its report. For countries with a relatively backward economy, such as ours, the principal problem is not merely to promote rapid development, but also to see that the benefits of this development accrue to all classes of the community. Freedom from want and from insecurity are needed not for a few but for all.

4. Economic development, as it has proceeded so far in India, has had little, if any, effect on the standard of life of the great bulk of the people of the country. There has been very little change, as the Planning Commission points out, in the occupational structure, despite considerable development of large-scale industries during the last four decades. In 1911, about 71 per cent of the working population were engaged in agriculture. According to certain estimates formed by the National Income Committee, while the population has increased this proportion has gone down only slightly to 68.2 per cent. Organized industries of the modern type afford employment to only about 2.4 million workers. The industrial sector has not grown at a rapid enough pace to offset the pressure of population on the land. On the contrary, with a growing population, the pressure tends to increase. Agriculture, as carried on in most parts of the country, can afford employment only for a part of the year. Hence, by and large, there is a great deal of chronic unemployment throughout the country, either intermittently or, occasionally, for prolonged periods.

5. It is against the background of these conditions that the order of priorities in the allocation of national resources has to be determined by a planning authority, and the social pattern designed. The competing objectives between which a choice has to be made are, according to the Planning Commission, maximum production, full employment, lower prices, greater equality of incomes. In the order of priorities, an increase in the output of essential consumption goods in the immediate future first claims attention. The limiting factor is the extent of the capital available; and, presumably therefore, the lesser the proportionate quantum of

capital required for the production of essential goods under a particular system, the greater should be its attractiveness in the present conditions of slow growth of capital formation. In as much as per unit of production the outlay of capital on production through cottage industries on a decentralized basis is less than through centralized mechanized industries, the choice, in the present circumstances, is necessarily in favour of the former, at any rate, in respect of the production of essential consumption goods.

6. Next in order of importance comes the provision of employment. Undoubtedly, for the production of food-grains and other essential agricultural commodities such as raw materials for various industries, the Planning Commission envisages a vast improvement in productivity and, where feasible, an increase in the area under cultivation. But in order to secure a rise in the level of production, it may be necessary, the Planning Commission visualizes, to increase the size of the unit of cultivation and to rationalize, in a sense, the system of farming, converting it from subsistence farming to economic farming. This will involve the displacement of large numbers from the land, computed by the Planning Commission at one third of those now engaged in agriculture, which process will swell the huge numbers of the rural population who are either unemployed or under-employed. In the reduction of this unemployment or under-employment, cottage and small-scale industries have an important part to play. In as much as, with us in India, labour is plentiful relatively to capital, preference must be given, the Planning Commission recognizes, wherever technical conditions permit, to labour-intensive rather than to capital-intensive processes. Cottage industries do not involve the use of elaborate techniques, they do not require any considerable outlay of capital on plant and equipment, and, if raw materials are available locally, these industries can cater effectively to the local markets. Besides, the volume of employment that is provided through cottage industries is, for a given outlay of capital, higher than through large-scale industries. What is needed is organization for securing finance, for purchasing raw materials, for introducing efficient techniques or for marketing

the products outside on favourable terms. The State can help in getting these handicaps removed through the encouragement of co-operative organization, through which can be derived several of the advantages available to large-scale industries.

7. The urgency and importance of this aspect of national planning, in the opinion of the Planning Commission, calls for action programmes which will develop a great deal of local initiative and will provide the economic frame-work within which cottage industries will have more than a fair prospect of success. Reverting to the handicaps, which hamper progress, these deficiencies are classified by the Planning Commission as under: lack of (1) organization, (2) preferential demand; (3) reasonably efficient methods of production; (4) raw materials; (5) finance. The main form of organizational structure that the Planning Commission conceives of is the industrial co-operative, either single-craft or multi-craft. Where bodies like the All-India Village Industries Association or the All-India Spinners' Association exist, they too may undertake development and help in the matter of finance, marketing and improvement of technique. The same agency can secure the benefits of finance on fair terms, Government helping those institutions, directly or indirectly, by providing guarantees or supplementing the internal resources. Through the machinery of these institutions, arrangements can be made to secure a regular supply of raw materials. Where access to such materials is to be had through Government, responsibility should be assumed by Government for organizing the supply of the requisite articles and if necessary for requisitioning supplies in the interest of workers in cottage industries.

8. The main object of production being for use and not for profit, it is assumed that active effort should be made at producing goods suitable for local consumption, and for stimulating the local demand for these commodities, if necessary, even by setting barriers to imports from other areas. The linking of the industrial co-operatives with the local multi-purpose co-operatives or with the village production councils may be helpful in securing

this object. This postulated, the State may assist in introducing in popularizing the products in outside markets through the opening of State-aided emporiums or depots or by helping in establishing contacts with co-operative bodies in consuming centres. Some preference should also be shown by the State in the matter of prices or quality when the products of cottage industries are to be purchased for their use by Governments. In the field of research, responsibility should be assumed, the Planning Commission emphasises, not only by the State Governments for their respective areas, but also by the Government at the Centre. It is in this sphere, the Planning Commission comments, that the action of Governments has been most deficient.

9. As part of the obligations of the State towards cottage industries, the Planning Commission refers to the drawing up of common production programmes for cottage industries, small-scale industries and large-scale industries with the object of affording increased scope for employment in rural areas. This may mean the reservation of certain spheres of production for cottage industries, without detriment to the interest of the consumer or of the community as a whole. Once Government satisfy themselves that the intensive and extensive development of a particular cottage industry is in the interest of national economy and that the organizational set-up is available for promoting this development, there is justification, in the opinion of the Planning Commission, for the grant of the maximum possible State assistance even though this may imply some temporary sacrifice on the part of the consumer of the commodity concerned. The assistance, the Planning Commission suggests, may take the form of a cess on the corresponding large-scale industry. The object of the cess will be, mainly, to bring about some kind of equality between the worker in cottage industry and the large-scale manufacturer, a secondary object being to obtain revenue to finance action on specific lines to stabilize the cottage industry on a sound footing. The proposal for the levy of such a cess, it is recommended, will be subject to its scrutiny by the Tariff Commission.

10. The foregoing picture of the future of cottage industries under planned economy has still to be completed. No attempt is made in this article to correlate it to the developments that have already taken place in this sector of our economic life in various parts of the country under the aegis or with the aid of Congress Ministries. It is likely that in several respects, what has been attempted during the last quinquennium may itself provide a suitable basis for the planned programme for the next quinquennium. Nor is it intended to examine the proposals in the light of the principles of the Sarvodaya Plan as that task can best be undertaken by some one from among those who have assisted in formulating the principles of that Plan. It may be worthwhile, however, to place alongside the Planning Commission's tentative plan for cottage industries, the specific recommendations made by the Economic Programme Committee which reported to the A. I. C. C. in January, 1948.

11. In the matter of planning, the achievement of national self-sufficiency for basic primary needs is to be accepted, the Committee recommended, as our immediate aim. Industries producing articles of food and clothing and other consumer goods should constitute the decentralized sector of national economy and should, as far as possible, be developed and run on a co-operative basis. The aim of economic planning with reference to small scale and cottage industries should be to provide for the full employment of human, animal and natural resources with maximum productive efficiency. A permanent board of research should be set up by Government for the purpose of securing such efficiency and for the better utilization of the nation's resources. In order to eliminate scope for exploitation, industries should be organized on non-profit lines through industrial co-operatives or through non-official promotional bodies. Production may be carried on individually or in a common workshop as conditions may demand. Co-ordination, supervision and guidance may be obtained through the setting up of Co-operative federal institutions. The maximum advantage should be taken of local markets and dependence on

transport reduced to a minimum, both for raw materials and for finished goods. Where resort is had to outside markets for either purpose, the State should help by granting facilities for transport, purchase and sale. Assistance should also be rendered by Government supplementing local financial resources and giving guarantees for outside finance. Preference should be given in the matter of purchases for the requirements of Government and a system of placing orders at standard rates may be evolved by Government. Similar arrangements may have to be devised for making available basic raw materials. Relief should be obtained from taxes as a form of indirect assistance to an essential economic activity. But before planned action is taken it would be necessary to undertake surveys into the availability of man-power and of material resources, particularly with a view to determining the demand for employment and the capacity of various forms of production for absorbing labour.

12. Set side by side, there seem to be many points of agreement between the programme of development as formulated by the small-scale and village industries section of the Economic Programme Committee and the provisional plan put forward by the Planning Commission. But a number of details have to be worked out, the machinery for the nation-wide execution of the plan has to be selected or created, and certain decisions have to be taken on broad aspects of economic policy. The national plan may have to provide, as the Rural and Cottage Industries Sub-Committee of the National Planning Committee observed over ten years ago, for the definite adoption of measures necessary for releasing cottage industries from the stress of competition and for facilitating the expansion of such industries to the desired extent of alleviating the evil of rural unemployment, and, at the same time, enabling them to provide a living wage to the workers in the industries. The foregoing is an attempt to indicate why, in the context of the existing economic conditions of our country and of our requirements, the promotion of cottage industries must occupy a place in our first five-year plan next in importance only to the development of agriculture. Moreover, planning can ill-afford to ignore

sociological factors. Capitalist industrialism with its concomitant mechanisation has bred conditions which are the very antithesis of democracy. Hence our choice should be in favour of decentralization of productive effort wherever such a process is feasible, as it is over large sectors, and to enable economic democracy to function through local organizations which cherish the integrity of the human individual and which provide scope for developing initiative, social responsibility and the art of self-governance. That, presumably, was, to my mind, the basis of the decentralized planning, as conceived of in the closing years of his life by Mahatma Gandhi.

VII

A YOUNG VILLAGE WORKER'S CHALLENGE

V. Padmanabhan.

'The Indian Village is a bundle of problems' said Sri G. Ramachandran once. After nearly five years of work in villages I have come to know the truth of this statement. But one thing about this fascinating bundle is that its problems are inextricably tied up together. That is why a Harijan worker by himself, or a Khadi worker by himself, or a Village Industries worker by himself is not a success. Taking one item of Constructive Work and striving to implement it has, more often than not, failed in the village. We everyday hear of the animosity that spreads around Harijan work, the scepticism that is woven round Khadi and Village Industries. Bapu perhaps was well alive to all these difficulties and stressed again and again on Samagra Gramaseva. Inside this programme of Samagra Gramaseva, the several items do not dwindle in their importance but only assume their singular and effective places. This is mostly forgotten by even seasoned Constructive Workers.

Let me give an account of my own experience. Just near Gandhigram in S. India is a small village consisting of both Harijans and Caste Hindus. We started our work first with Harijans thinking that to uplift them was the first step in village work. During several months we switched the attention of the whole institution and the time of many important workers on to the Harijans but the whole work came to naught. Many new impediments cropped up and all our efforts were spent in fighting them and thus creating still more of them. After working for more than an year we left off in sheer exhaustion and frustration. Some months after, we started all over again but shifted the emphasis and tried to work more with the caste Hindus, not wholly neglecting the Harijans at the same time. The old problems did not arise again. But our work to all outer appearances was very slow and ineffective. There was'nt so much noise now. Slowly the caste people started coming to us for little things now and then. We tried our best to help them. They had now realized our intentions to do good to the Harijans and in fact a few of them at least agreed to treat the Harijans as their equals. This happened because the second time, we did not start with Harijan work alone but took up other items besides.

Often times to be quick and effective in our work we have to take a particular item which might seem to be not very important at the moment. In another village there were quite a good number of leprosy cases. The possibility of the disease spreading was haunting the minds of the villagers. At a very psychological moment we went in and assured them of our help to fight the disease. We started a clinic, spoke to the people about the disease, suggested measures for checking it from spreading and won their affection. We have now not only partly stopped the infection from spreading out, but we have created the confidence needed for pushing other items of works. There is a Basic School in the village, and the Basic teacher has become one of the family of the villagers. A Maternity Centre is also functioning and the villagers even in these difficult days have rendered all

assistance for building it. Sanitation has improved to a great extent. A few of the villagers have become regular spinners. We can say that it is one of the villages where we have won real co-operation.

These instances brought home another fact. The attempt to string up some routine activities into a pattern and repeat ti day after day seldom fetches any result. For example when we send students and staff on special occasions to the villages, we suggest a programme which is often the same; prayer early morning, followed by sanitation, flag hoisting, spinning and a meeting at the end. This programme, when attempted for the first time in a village yields some result, more for the colour and curiosity it carries rather than for its genuine significance. When it becomes a regular affair, people cease to pay any attention whatsoever and we return, disappointed and very much disheartened. Prayer, saphai etc., are no doubt very important. But in the life-context of the villages they fail to impress people when mechanically repeated. We have, therefore, to knock at the centre of the life-problem in any village. To that end, the thirteenth item of the Constructive Programme, economic equality, seems to be the most important one.

This important item is also the most difficult item. One should have a complete picture of the ideology in mind and then only proceed further. It is more difficult than abolishing untouchability. The consequences of working out this particular item are yet to be gauged. The very thought of its possible consequences have precluded many from touching it. May be even our own Constructive Work institutions might have to be sacrificed if we seriously take up the question of economic equality. Many of the institutions either depend on Governmental aid or on help from the rich. In the endeavour to bring economic equality we will surely have to knock at both the Government and the privileged rich. This is enough to create dismay in many and force them to postpone taking up this item.

Institutions themselves, which are charged with this task of bringing economic equality, are hugging tenaciously to class

differences. This is patent in almost all institutions of Constructive Work. There is a privileged group and a toiling group. The former has a complete understanding of Gandhism and the latter is almost blind to the existence of any such ideology. The physically worked class is treated as equal at food and even allowed to dwell with the other group. Even so, they are never brought up to the economic level of the privileged group. The privileged group possesses the intellect to explain away this difference in such a lucid manner that one is at a loss in an argument.

Gandhigram has fortunately realized this in time and has started in earnest to mend it. A new community-living has begun where, workers, students and children are all treated as equal. The need is the criterion and not the work that one is doing. Everything is arranged by a Community Director. Provision is made for individual commitments and responsibilites. This undermines freedom to the little extent that one cannot always freely go in for things to satisfy one's own cultural and literary wants. The community is engaged in studying this and may very soon evolve a method by which even special and occasional needs might be met. So this is the unique experiment going on at Gandhigram to-day.

If Gandhism is to be the alternative to Communism, it is fatal to neglect the abolition of class and economic inequality. Many of the youths of this country are drawn to Communism because it promises to abolish all class. Many youths, who are still in Constructive Work, are slowly losing belief in the efficacy of the Constructive Programme as it is being worked now. Constructive Work institutions should, therefore, immediately take cognisance of these realities and try to change their outlook and method of work.

It is here that many young workers to-day draw inspiration from Shri J. C. Kumarappa. He has now broken away from the four walls of the very institution which he created and developed during the last sixteen years. His giving up of the Presidentship of the All India Village Industries Association in

order to settle down in the Seldoh village is of the utmost significance. Perhaps he too has realized that institutionalism has strict limitations for a Gandhian revolutionary. His attempt to build up a largely self-sufficient economy in the Seldoh village, putting aside money, fills many of us with the hope that he may to-day point the way out of the ruts into which much of Constructive Work has fallen. In the Seldoh experiment Shri Kumarappa will tolerate no class distinctions. This experiment is, therefore, his real 60th birth-day gift to young workers like me who believe in Constructive Work and are yet baffled by many of its contradictions in practice. Shri Kumarappa may be sixty to-day, but in this new experiment he is revealing himself as the youngest among us. We shall follow where he leads. In Tamilnad specially, there are many of us who will follow him to the very end. The work he has done in recent years to bring justice to the landless army of agricultural labourers has given us great courage to persist in the work we are doing. I personally owe much of my inspiration to take up the non-violent fight for economic equality to Shri Kumarappa. He has shown that economic equality is vital to the Gandhian Constructive Programme and that there is a chance for achieving it non-violently. No one among Gandhiji's co-workers has done this better than Shri Kumarappa.. What a pity, therefore, that he is misunderstood even among Constructive Workers. The whole future of the Constructive Programme depends on showing that it can establish economic equality in a better way than Communism or Socialism. If Shri Kumarappa proves this to-day, he does the greatest service to Gandhiji and the Constructive Programme. Many of us younger Constructive Workers, therefore, pray with all our hearts that Shri Kumarappa may be spared for many more years to come to demonstrate how the Constructive Programme can really establish a casteless and classless society. Long live Kumarappa, the non-violent revolutionary and undefeatable rebel!

VIII

ECONOMICS AND RELIGION.

DR. P. K. SEN

Economics, as we understand it, deals with the needs of life, their demand and supply. Religion deals with the whole of our conduct. The relation between the demand and supply of our needs on the one hand and our conduct on the other is largely the relation between economics and religion.

Our demands come from ourselves, but the supply there of depends on the environment in which we live and our command over it. Like animals we are born with certain essential demands without meeting which, we cannot survive. We also create other demands with a view to adding joy and fullness to our life. The demands essential for our survival are those of hunger for food, protection from the rigours of climate and from attack by fellow-creatures and the desire for procreation. Created demands give us surplus values and we enjoy them as luxuries. Human efforts, though begun with the object of satisfying essential, needs, go on seeking increasing satisfaction in the enjoyment of surpluses.

But nature hardly knows any surplus. Production and consumption are balanced by the 'Law of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest.' The stronger animals, like the tiger, devour the weaker ones like lambs. Never the less nature provides vegetation for the lamb. What remains a mystery is how, not only the strength of muscle or the ferociousness of the tiger or the cunning of the jackal but also the resourcefulness of birds, the co-operation of bees, the perseverance of ants, the maternal instinct in all the living creatures etc. work hand in hand to maintain balance in nature. Man, seemingly standing on the top of organic revolution, manifests potentialities of all these instincts of living beings. Over and above all this, he possesses a gift of reason by virtue of which, he can restrain those that provoke struggle and foster those which resolve it, thus bending the struggle itself towards peace.

The struggle in nature is the struggle for the satisfaction of the demands of life. But man, though a product of nature, searches a way of peaceful living. Human effort began with the production of essential needs. But as the means of production improved man went on increasing his demands beyond the limits of the essential and found increased satisfaction in the consumption of surpluses consisting of comforts and luxuries. This lead to the upsetting of the balance between man and man. A few, born with better intelligence or blessed with greater opportunities obtained more and more enjoyment, while the larger number did not get even the essentials to balance the surplus enjoyed by the few. He, who had the surplus, reconciled himself to it by clinging to the 'Law of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest'. Greed blinded him. He did not see that his very survival depended on his exploitation of those he took as unfit. His survival was at stake. How to save himself from greed, the enemy within, became his search. The way out he discoverd was the way of love as known between parents and children, brothers and sisters etc. The conception of God as the Father and makind as a brotherhood thus emerged. This he called his religion. The law of all laws within

his religion, guiding his conduct and shaping his character, was that he should not do anything to hamper human brotherhood. Within that limit, of which his conscience was the only keeper, man was free to act as he liked.

All conscience is a matter of the spirit. Unless it is fostered by the cultivation of faith, born of right education and experience, and maintained by constant vigilance, man fails in strength to keep to the plan of brotherhood. The objective shape of this faith and vigilance is his way of life to meet his needs and that is his true economics.

Throughout the history of his civilization man has sought for ways to promote brotherhood. Vedantism, Budhism, Christianity and Islam arose at one time or other. Marxism and Gandhism have now appeared to make fresh attempts. It is strange that, while all these religions and movements have proclaimed human brotherhood as their goal, no two of them could work together in harmony. In spite of the unity of their declarations, peace failed, because of the differences in their methods and means.

To counteract the man of passions striving for luxuries without limit, came the man of understanding and emotion, invoking the spirit of renunciation even in regard to such objects and ties which are necessary to sustain human life. The common man, unable to overcome his hunger for food and concern for those whom he loved, found himself helpless and sought relief now from one strong in immaterial possessions and then from another pure and strong on spirit.

Human capacity for production of material goods and for moral substance failed to balance each other. The man, who mastered the means of material production, did not develop conscience enough to control his passion for surplus demands. The man, who invoked the spirit to control passion, did not care to acquire mastery over the means of production of the material needs of life. Humanity was thus split between the material and the spiritual, each part trying to over-power the other. The result was increasing struggle between individuals and wars between nations.

Life for its very sake wants peace. The man of peace needs to follow the path of the 'Golden Mean', acquiring enough moral power on the one hand to arrest his demands within the limit of essentials and on the other hand enough material power to be able to meet the essential demands. He must know his religion to keep him within the plan of human brotherhood and he must equally know his economics to produce and at the same time balance his demand and supply for a good and healthy life. As man cannot live alone he seeks life in a community and as in the last analysis of economics man lives on land, his life within the plan of brotherhood can only begin in a community over which he has effective control, through his conscience, and on an area of land that will support the unit of his community. With the simultaneous development of moral conscience and natural sciences man can reach the ideal of human brotherhood and maintain and promote a life and a way of peace.

The spirit can find life only in action that fulfils life's legitimate demands. Economics of human brotherhood thus becomes a religion. Religion, which does not express itself through such economics, is no religion at all.

IX

FACE TO FACE WITH THE VILLAGERS

T. K. Bang.

Like many educated people in India I had read much about the villages and the village people in my country. Like many educated people again, I was born and brought up in a village, and yet, I never really knew the villages nor took any interest in them. It was only in 1947, when I was on the staff of the College of Commerce in Wardha, that I had my first contact with villagers in their own setting. We were out conducting a rural survey in a village. In the night, one of us started lecturing to a crowd of villagers who were tired and sleepy after their day's work. The speaker waxed eloquent on the need for sanitation and for converting all nightsoil into manure. One of the villagers lifted up his head and put a question to the speaker: "Is it your idea to talk and then go away or will you actually show us how to do what you are asking us to do?" We took up the challenge. We started digging a trench and putting up a trench latrine. Like magic, the villagers suddenly dropped their mask

of apathy and suspicion and co-operated with us, even offering food and other hospitality to all of us. It then came to me in a flash that while villagers were suspicious of talkers and preachers, they were ready to co-operate with those who would themselves practically show the way. Since then, I have had more contacts, off and on, with villagers. But I really came face to face with them only after I threw up my work in the College and went out to work all the time among them. And, as I so lived and worked with them, I made more and more discoveries and a number of my prejudices and illusions alike fell away from me. I had read and heard of two typical views of villagers before. The first was that they were lazy, ignorant, uncultured, superstitious and dirty. The other was that they were unspoilt, truthful, easily lead and very lovable. I found, however, from my own experience, that these were half-truths, prejudices, exaggeration or idealisation.

Is not the Indian villager poor ? Certainly yes. His poverty has become proverbial. And yet, I was amazed to find how villagers, living from hand to mouth, have constructed temples, rest-houses, wells etc., feed hundreds of people during the anniversaries in the temples and engage themselves in numerous other community activities. Is not an Indian villager ignorant and illiterate ? Certainly yes. Literacy in rural areas is less than 10 per cent. And yet, these illiterate persons, apparently cut off from contacts with the outside world, are amazingly intelligent, well informed and resourceful. Is the Indian villager cultured ? No. Not in any modern sense of the term. You will never catch him saying 'Thank you' at any time. And yet, no one can beat villagers in true civility and hospitality. They are polite and specially so to strangers. They have their own words of greeting. Even if they are reserved with and suspicious of strangers, they are never rude as city people are so often. Their hospitality knows no bounds. In cities nothing is available except for payment. In the village you cannot buy any hospitality. You get it free or not at all and most often you get it free. A villager would consider it an insult if offered money for a meal or a drink.

Tenacity and some kind of courage have become part of the life of the village. In the biting cold, he will spend night after night watching the crops without any woollen clothes and with only thin cotton covering. In the rainy season he will not mind getting drenched for hours at a stretch. In the long summer he will be out in the blazing sun without an umberalla or a covering for the head. In the pitch dark nights he will move about without a lantern. He has no weapons worth the name against wild boars or leopards. The thought of serpents in the dark never frightens him. If some one talks to him to express admiration for these qualities, he will look blank and wonder what there is to admire at all in living his life in the way he has to.

Idealising villagers as unspoilt and innocent people possessing all the pristine virtues is nonsense. He may appear better in comparison with the sophisticated city people. But he can be very cunning. He has learnt to decive and is an adept in the adulteration of many materials which he sells to outsiders. By long suffering he has himself become callous to the suffering of others. Another misconception is that villagers are very hard working. This is true only of some sections of the people in the villages. The mass of labourers will work honestly only under the master's eye. Farmers do not treat labourers in the villages now in the kindly old traditional manner because of competition and poverty all round. The master-servant relations have been terribly corrupted and for the first time in our history a vast rural-labour problem is coming up with far reaching consequences. The diet of the people is hopelessly unbalanced and this has sapped their vitality and health. In fact, the problem of public health in the villages is something, of which, our Public Health Departments have absolutely no idea. It is one of the biggest menaces to the future of our country.

The mind of the villager has many superstitions. For centuries, he has seen all kinds of diseases ravaging the villages and wiping out whole sections of the population. He is unable to trace the causes and is bewildered by their recurrence. He

therefore, attributes the diseases to the displeasure of the gods and spends time and money in propitiating them. Caste distinctions and untouchability die hard in villages. Women have to suffer much illtreatment in villages. We have thought of the Harijans and their sufferings and done something to uplift them. But in the villages the women suffer even more. They work longer and harder and get less from life than men. From girlhood they get different treatment from that given to the boys, who get better food and are sent to schools. Women are merely the bearers of children and often treated like the beasts of burden.

Their sufferings and their devotion and the inexplicable ways in which they somehow find their own happiness are among the mysteries of our life. All-India Organizations of women have never touched the life of these people in the villages. It is only after the establishment of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust and the training of women village workers under it, that we have, for the first time, the beginning of an attempt to serve village women and to improve their conditions. But it will take an army of trained workers and decades of ceaseless work to bring happiness and good health to village women. One of the most crying and urgent needs in the villages is for trained midwives who will approach the work in the spirit of true service.

There is, undoubtedly, an economic and social crisis gripping our villages today. But deeper than all that is the crisis of the human spirit. The fact is, villagers have nearly lost hope of a better life. They cannot be easily wakened to any sense of urgency regarding the rebuilding of their own lives. They have become bitter and there is a rising tide of anger in their hearts. Their difficulties appear insurmountable. They have long been exploited by everybody who has gone to the villages from outside, the zamindar, the bania, the priest, the teacher, the doctor and the worst of all by politicians. In our pre-independence days, politicians promised villagers that village reconstruction would be the first major task of our own national Government. Just now also the general elections are on and all sorts of promises are being

made to catch their votes. No candidate has the courage to tell them that they will have to work out their own salvation by hard work, self-reliance and mutual co-operation and that the State can afterall help them only upto a point. When workers from outside talk to them today of sanitation, khadi, village industries, basic education etc. they will nod their heads in approval without meaning anything. If workers bank on these nods they will soon find that they are on slippery ground. It ts no use then getting angry and calling the villagers by bad names. It is only very rarely that, some villagers will put up the challenge to those that come to improve their lot, that they should first earn their own bread by one of the occupations available in the village and then show where is the time and energy for sanitation or education. But the number of such people is steadily increasing and it is no longer possible to deceive villagers by talks and promises.

The most important thing to realize is that the villagers are as good human beings as any elsewhere. There is in their blood and bone the heritage of some great unwritten culture. They are in their own way proud of their villages and their traditions. They will not allow any one easily to look into the wounds in their hearts. Their mud houses are their castles and their villages the best places in the world and their cattle and neighbours and occupation are all good enough for them. If outsiders will not rob or cheat or exploit them they will be grateful. Above all, they will lift their eyes to God and repeat again and again that God's will alone can prevail. They have their own dignity and self-respect. What they need is not merely the intellectual comprehension of their problems by others but the fellowship of the heart that will accept them as the back-bone of the nation. They cry out for the recognition of the fact that the cities and the educated community flourish because of their labour and toil. The idle parasitic people in the towns will have to reckon with the new mind growing in the villages and they will fail to do so only at their peril. Among young people in the villages particularly, there is a new awakening. They do not

want to tolerate social and economic inequalities any more. They are not going to be satisfied with palliatives. They will soon rise up and oppose all exploitation. If Constructive Workers will not show them the peaceful way of real progress they are sure to find out other methods to cut their way to a better future for themselves. If we do not apply the technique of non-violence for the solution of the social and economic problem of our villages, no power on earth can stop a violent revolution overtaking India. It is here that Shri Vinobaji is setting the example for all Constructive Workers to follow. Let us respond to the challenge before it is too late. That challenge is for an army of selfless and trained workers to go to the villages and stand by the village people in their difficulties and to help them by personal example and work to move forward to a better, happier and fuller life.

X

INDIA AFTER GANDHI.

G. RAMACHANDRAN

What is happening in India after Mahatma Gandhi ? While alive, he filled the mind of India with his ideas. He also trained the people to work out those ideas. Above all, he himself lead in all the good work he initiated to create a peaceful and just social order. His fundamental idea was that a peaceful world must be a just world and that a just world must be peaceful. To a world filled with injustice and conflicts he, therefore, presented a programme of dynamic non-violence in action. He showed that violence and justice were contradictions. Justice obtained through violence would corrupt justice. Peace without justice would be impossible. The fight for justice and the stabilising of peace were welded into a single process of Satyagraha. But Gandhi is now no more. Is India still working out his great programme ? Is India continuing to make a contribution ?

The Gandhian movement was no temporary wave in the mind of India. Gandhi had reached out to the roots of the

human mind in India and vitalised it. His work is still our work. His objective of a just and peaceful human society is still our goal. His whole programme, therefore, still remains the programme of the people of India. The whole of that programme is not the programme of the Indian National Congress. The Congress is going its own way since Indian Independence. The whole of that programme is not the programme of the Nehru Government. The Government too is going its own way. And yet neither the Congress nor the Government is able to break away wholly from the objective and the methods of Gandhi. The Congress has to tell the people incessantly that its way is still the Gandhian way and the Government has to invoke the name of Gandhi all the time to get the support of the people. This is significant. But there is something far more significant in India today. That is the mind of the people and the work of those engaged in the Constructive Programme of Gandhi. People outside India know Gandhi and the Congress. But the Constructive Programme and its many sided challenge not at all. And yet they are the most significant things in India in relation to Gandhi and his work and the furture of that work.

The Constructive Workers are those engaged in carrying out the Constructive Programme laid down by Gandhi. The Constructive Programme is some thirty years old. Even so, it is a new programme because more and more items of vital service of the people have been added to it from time to time. It is thus an ever growing programme. It is a programme of the service of the people, by the people and for the people. Hence its dynamic character. Items within it include social, political, economic, educational and other work which touch the life of the people on every side. The whole of real Constructive Work is voluntary work by trained and dedicated workers. Gandhiji built up the great all-India organizations of Constructive Work like the Charkha Sangh, the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the Gram Udyog Sangh, the Talimi Sangh, the Go-Seva Sangh, the Hindustani Prachar Sabha and the Kasturba Trust to carry forward the Constructive

Programme. Besides these all-India bodies, there sprang up numerous independent institutions of the people in many parts of the country to lend a hand in the great work. There are some four to five thousand Constructive Workers scattered throughout the country. Through the various items of the Constructive Programme, active workers are in touch with the life of the people at numerous points.

Constructive Workers at present are not pulling their full weight in either the shaping or the implementation of national policies and programmes. It is the Central and State Governments, little influenced by Constructive Workers, which are shaping national policies. These policies and programmes are rarely in conformity with those laid down in the Gandhian Constructive Programme. Constructive Workers are not yet able to affect the situation for the reason that they have not fully realized their own unity of purpose and organization. So long as Gandhi lived he was the point of unity among all Constructive Workers and he was the authoritative link between them and political leadership. After Gandhi the Constructive Workers have had to discover some other effective point of unity. This they have not yet succeeded in doing. They have made an attempt in the right direction by setting up the Sarva Sava Sangh with a measure of over-all jurisdiction in relation to all Constructive Work in the country. The Gram Udyog Sangh and the Krishi and Go-Seva Sangh have already merged in the Sarva Seva Sangh and other all-India organizations of Constructive work are federated with it. Life long co-workers of Gandhi in the Constructive Programme like K. G. Mashruwala, Kaka Kalelkar, Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Kumarappa and others are members of the Sarva Seva Sangh. Acharya Vinoba, without being a member, holds the moral leadership of the Sarva Seva Sangh. The Sangh has as its Secretary Shankerrao Deo, who was long the Secretary of the Indian National Congress. He gave up active political work to devote his whole time to the Sarva Seva Sangh.

While it is true that Constructive Workers are at present unable to make their influence fully felt, let none imagine

that they are without any influence. Both the Government and the Congress know very well that Constructive Workers are in touch with the people. Even more than that, they have a moral standing in the mind of the people, which is of some consequence to everybody. Constructive Work has not receded after Gandhi. On the contrary, it shows signs of spreading out more and more and digging itself deeper and deeper into the life of the people. Leaders of Constructive Work have warned workers throughout the country not to lose themselves hastily in party politics but to go on steadily increasing their active service of and contact with the people. The idea is not to keep away from politics altogether or always, but to create adequate influence with the people before plunging into political action. When Acharya Vinoba was recently asked whether he would state that Constructive Workers will not take active part in politics he said he could guarantee no such thing all the time. In the meanwhile the all-India bodies of Constructive Work are training more and more workers and planning and carrying out more and more work in various directions. Some five to six hundred workers are every year trained by the various organizations and then plunged into Constructive Work. The Charkha Sangh, the Talimi Sangh, the Gram Udyog Sangh, the Go-Seva Sangh and the Kasturba Trust have widened and deepened their work in the last few years. Numerous conferences and meetings of Constructive Workers have been held throughout the country to consider how best they can influence national policies and plans.

The National Planning Commission set up by the Government of India has published its Five Year Draft Plan. The Commission has given some thought to Khadi, Village Industries and Basic Education, which are all important items in the Constructive Programme. One of the members of the Planning Commission came to Wardha to discuss various points in the Draft Plan with leaders of Constructive Work. Acharya Vinoba was inivited to go to New Delhi and sit with the Members of the Planning Commission so that the Commission could have the full benefit of

the clear views of Constructive Workers. In these discussions Acharya Vinoba has placed before the Planning Commission the views of Constructive Workers. That undoubtedly means he pressed the claims of Khadi, Village Industries, Basic Education and of landless agricultural labour in the making of any plan of national reconstruction. It is not unlikely that the Draft Plan may now undergo some changes to make it more real in terms of the life of the common mass of the people. Otherwise it will have to face increasing opposition from workers in close touch with the daily life of the people and their most pressing problems.

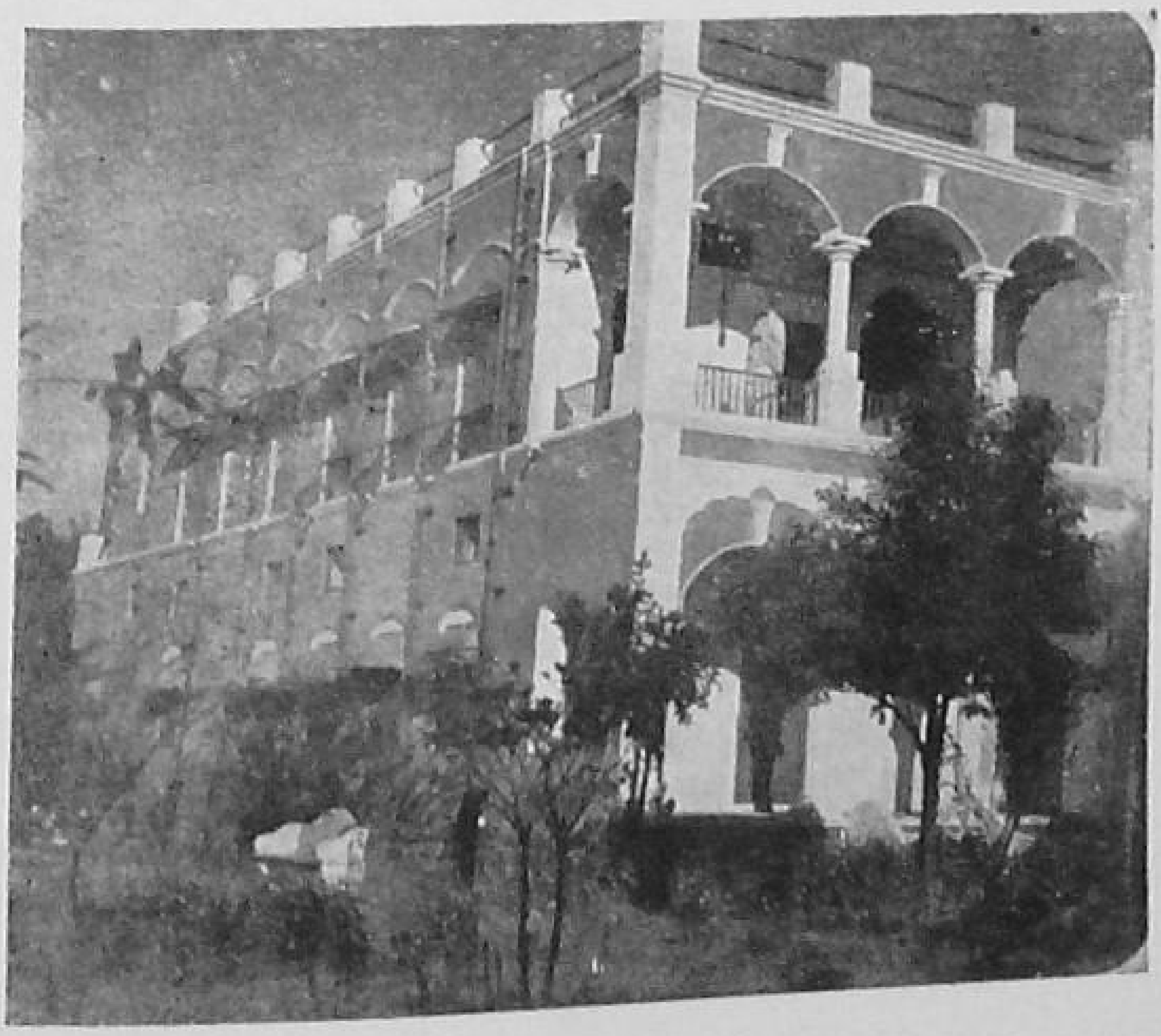
About an year ago, Constructive Workers gathered from all over India in a series of conferences in Wardha to produce their own plan of national reconstruction. Kaka Kalelkar guided the deliberations of these meetings. From these meetings emerged the Constructive Workers' Plan for India. This Plan has now become known as the 'Sarvodaya Plan'. It has already obtained large recognition and is now available in quite a number of Indian languages. One of the most remarkable things in India today is how some of the leading political parties have come forward to swear allegiance to this Plan. The Congress party, the Indian Socialist party and the Praja party are all proclaiming to the people in the course of their present campaign in the General Elections, that they are ready to implement the Sarvodaya Plan. The curious thing is that, the Plan itself was produced by a non-political body of Constructive Workers but the promise to work it comes from leading political parties, who are fighting with each other in the General Elections. The Constructive Workers themselves are not forming a political party yet to implement their Plan.

Another significant factor in the present situation is the rapid spread of literature concerning the Constructive Programme throughout the country. In the last few years a great deal of literature has been produced giving to the people the Gandhian technique in the field of national reconstruction. This certainly means that more and more people are studying the ideology and methodology of the Constructive Programme. The slow but steady spread

of Basic Education is also a revolutionary factor in the situation. The Central and Provincial Governments have taken up Basic Education and are pledged to spread it on a nation-wide scale. Now Basic Education is the process of the whole of the Constructive Programme passing into the substance of the education of the new generations. Wherever a Basic School is built there the whole of the Constructive Programme will take root in the soil of the peoples, mind. When Basic Education rises to full tide then we shall have the India of Gandhi's dream.

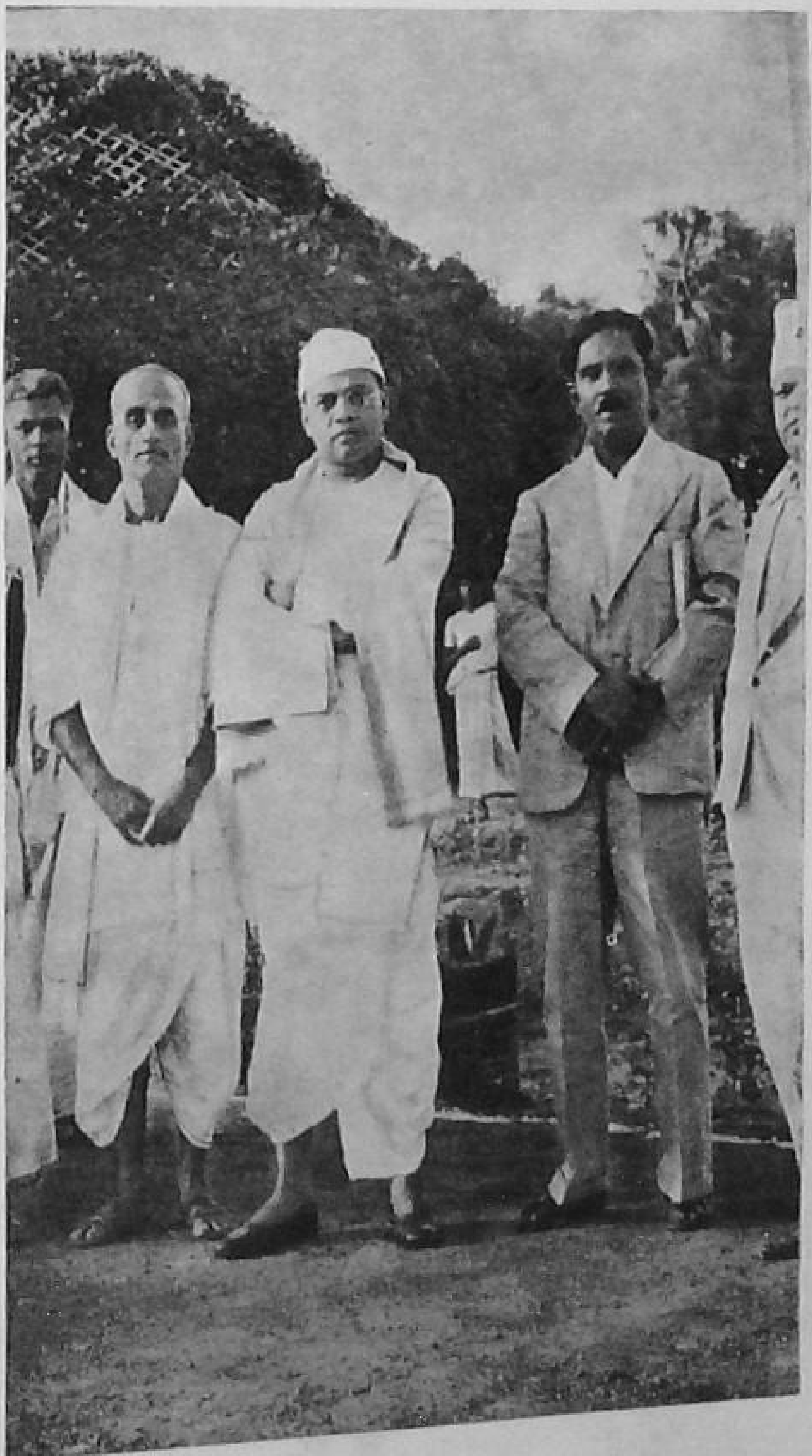
But more than all other portents is the personality, character and work of a man, who is today walking in the foot-steps of the Master with matchless clarity and courage of mind. This is Acharya Vinoba. Gandhi has long marked him out as one of those who would carry his message to fruition. A few months ago Acharya Vinoba returned to Wardha after a walking tour of several weeks through Telangana, which is part of the Hyderabad State, where during the last three or four years the Communists have remained unconquered by the Indian Police and Army. With him walked a handful of companions with nothing in their hands except their invincible courage and goodwill for the common people. Acharya Vinoba met thousands of peasants face to face and learnt directly from them what was moving them in joining hands with the Communists. As he walked from village to village he declared that he himself was a Communist but a strictly non-violent one. He told the peasants that, he too wanted the same economic justice for them as the Communists promised, including a just re-distribution of land. But he warned them that if they tried to achieve justice through violence and murder, they would defeat themselves under the present conditions in India. In the wake of his walking tour there started spontaneously the 'Bhoomi-Dan' movement for the voluntary surrender of land by those holding more land than they needed for re-distribution among the landless peasants. The walking tour was also one of mass adult education in truth and in non-violence. After resting for some time in his little ashram in Paunar near Wardha, Acharya Vinoba started his second great walking

Inside the Library, Maganvadi

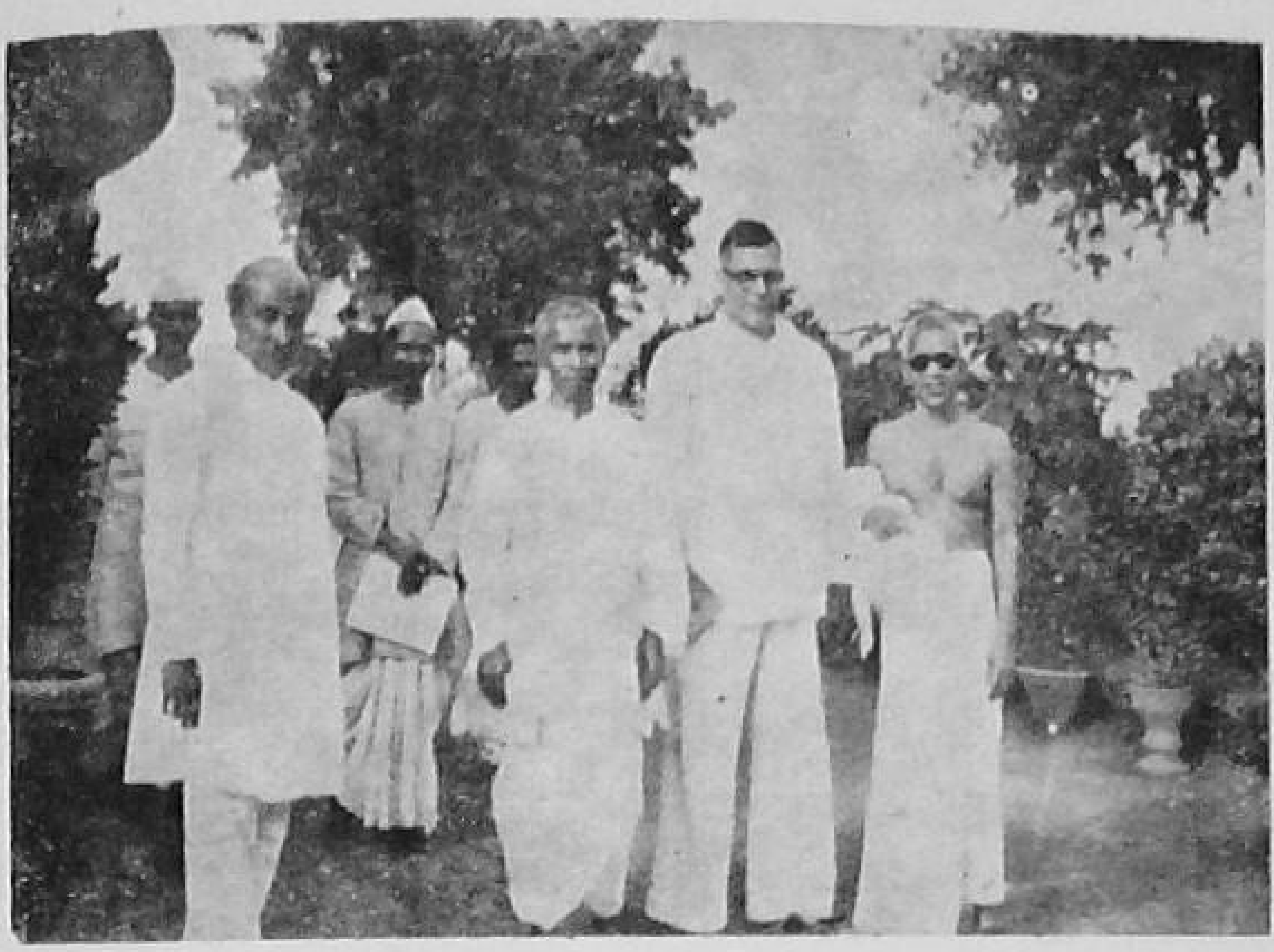


Central office Building, Maganvadi

Sishu Vihar
in Maganvadi

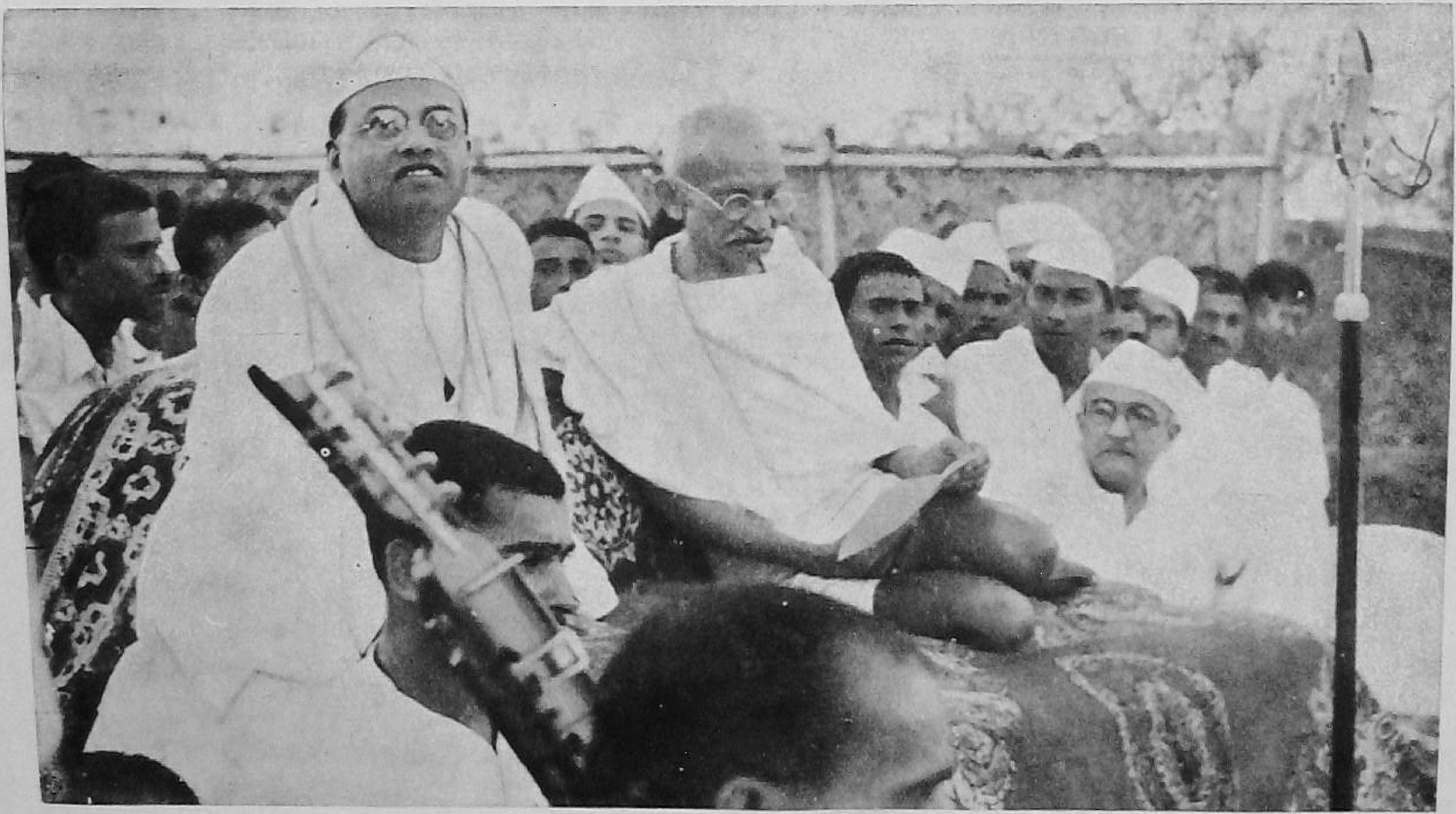


In the Shermadevi Ashram



Dr. P. C. Ghosh
Sri. Harekrishna Mehtab
and
Sri. Shanker Rao Deo
at Maganvadi

Reception to the
President
Sri. Rajendra Prasad,
Maganvadi



Kumarappa, Gandhiji and Shankerlal Banker
at the opening of the Magan Sangrahalaya—December 1938

PART FIVE

ANECDOTES AND TRIBUTES.

I

MY REMINISCENCES OF KUMARAPPA

KAKA KALELKAR

How I first met Kumarappa comes back to my mind. Gandhiji was sitting under the shade of a tree on the river bank in the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati. I was sitting with Gandhiji talking to him about the Gujerath Vidyapith, of which I was the Principal. I had finished my work with Gandhiji and was about to go away when a brisk young man, dressed in pucca European style, and with clear beaming eyes, came up to Gandhiji. He was a Chartered Accountant in Bombay and was doing good business, but he was keen on doing something to help Gandhiji in his great work for India. Gandhiji gave him time and listened to him. Gandhiji suggested that the young man should see Sri Shankerlal Banker, who was then the Secretary of the A. I. S. A., and, if necessary, go also to the Gujerath Vidyapith. Gandhiji turned to me and said to me in Gujerathi that I might give the young man some good work to do. I have no recollection if Gandhiji formally introduced us to each other.

Sometime later, Kumarappa wrote to me expressing a wish to join the Gujerath Vidyapith. I sent him a reply warmly welcoming him to the Vidyapith. There was something in the eyes of Kumarappa which had given me the impression that there was a strong and determined idealist behind his western make-up and style. I was, therefore, agreeably surprised when Kumarappa came to the Vidyapith with a Gandhi cap on his head and dressed in a Khadi Kurta. Neither fitted him well and his appearance was somewhat ludicrous. In those days inter-dining among different communities was rare. The Professors and students in the Vidyapith were all Hindus and Kumarappa was a Christian. I thought it a good chance to start inter-dining in the institution. Usually I took my food in my own room, but when Kumarappa came I sent word that he and I would go and have food with the students. I knew my students and, therefore, apprehended no difficulty. The cooks were surprised but raised no protest. When we all went into the common dining room, I thought Kumarappa, with his European training, would find it hard to squat on the floor like the rest of us. I, therefore, got a table and chair for him near me. Kumarappa however, insisted on sitting on the floor with the rest of us. I told him not to stand on any formality but make himself comfortable on the chair. Kumarappa retorted he was not yet so old as to be unable to change from the chair to the floor. He did, therefore, sit on the floor but not cross legged like others. He sat twisting the whole body in the shape of an irregular N. We had the good manners not to burst into laughter.

I soon discovered that Kumarappa was full of fun and frolic. His conversation was replete with tit-bits and humourous anecdotes. He would crack jokes often at my expense. I knew I could give it back to him but I let the one way traffic of his jokes go on for sometime. We became good friends and had many talks on the situation in India and Gandhiji's new programmes. Kumarappa had joined the Vidyapith as a Professor. He would accept no salary saying that he had put by some money and as long as that lasted he would take no salary for

his work. I told him it was not necessary for him to wait till his money ran out and that he could take his pay from the very first day. After all, what did we give to our professors in the Vidyapith, hardly Rs. 100/- per month, if I remember right! But Kumarappa kept his resolve.

But what was he to teach? He knew neither Hindi nor Gujerathi and I did not want him to teach in English. I asked him to teach me Tamil since he came from Madras. Then I discovered that Kumarappa did not know even his mother tongue well enough. Kumarappa shrewdly remarked I wanted him to teach me Tamil so that I could teach him Gujerathi! Kumarappa never seriously tried to learn Hindi or Gujerathi and I refused to give him any class to teach. He was thus a Professor without a class. But I found a way out.

Gandhiji had asked us not to accept current economic theories as gospel truth. He had asked us to study Indian conditions afresh. He wanted a fresh survey of economic conditions in India and to strike out on new lines to deal with economic problems. Kumarappa had already written a thesis entitled, "Public Finance and our Poverty." We published the thesis. It was a brilliant exposure of how British policy was impoverishing India. I asked Kumarappa whether he would undertake the economic survey of a taluka in Gujerath with the help of some of my students. He agreed. So, with Jhaverbhai Patel and another student, he went to the Matar Taluka and conducted an excellent survey. It was a very valuable report that he produced. He also got his first insight into the real conditions in the villages of India. He trained the students under him in the scientific methods of regional survey. But he learnt no Gujerathi!

The next commission which Kumarappa received was from the Indian National Congress. He was appointed the Secretary of a Committee to enquire into the Public Debt of India. The result of the enquiry was a document of great national importance, and when this was published, Kumarappa's name came out prominently before the Indian public. People began to look up to him

expecting great things from him. The Bihar earth-quake gave Kumarappa another opportunity to prove his mettle. Babu Rajendra Prasad was in charge of the extensive relief work. Kumarappa and Rajendra Babu came close to each other and Kumarappa was put in charge of all the accounts connected with the relief operations. The whole of India had contributed many lakhs of rupees and these were spent spread over numerous items of relief work. Kumarappa kept the accounts with scrupulous care and took care of every pie. He would not even feed Gandhiji and his party except on payment! He worked day and night to keep accounts up to date. When the relief work was finally closed Kumarappa was able to account for every pie that was spent. Gandhiji himself paid unstinted tribute to Kumarappa for the work he did in Bihar.

When Gandhiji wanted to organize village industries on a proper basis he wanted some one to shoulder the hevy burden. It was Mrs. Lilavati Munshi who suggested to Gandhiji that Kumarappa was the man for the work. Gandhiji agreed that there could be none better for the the job and thus the All India Village Industries Association was started, with Kumarappa as the Secretary. During some 15 years, when Kumarappa was the Secretary of A. I. V. I. A., he not merely experimented with and organized village industries, training workers for the same but he gave a scientific interpretation to the whole theory of village economics as expounded by Gandhiji. Upon Kumarappa fell the mantle of the interpreter and organizer of Gandhian economics of non-violence. Kumarappa's books and writings on economics have considerably moulded the mind of young India and specially of Construtive Workers. Gandhiji gave his ideas on economics to young India. It was Kumarappa, however, who gave scientific interpretations in a manner acceptable to the educated community.

Economics and religion are one for Kumarappa. Production, distribution and consumption of worldly goods should fit in with the moral teachings inherent in religion. Religion should include economics. That is why Kumarappa the Christian, found

himself in conflict with the Metropolitan. Kumarappa challenged the Metropolitan to prove the moral validity of the Metropolitan's support to British rule in India and his indifference to the righteousness of the Satyagraha movements in India under the leadership of Christ-like Gandhi. This controversy attracted considerable public attention. Kumarappa's name emerged from it as that of one wedded to uncompromising truth and out-spokenness.

Kumarappa's two books on the teachings of Christ *i. e.* "Practice and Precepts of Jesus" and "Christianity - Its Economy and Way of Life" breathe the depth of his sincerity as a true Christian. He agreed with me when I once chaffed him by saying that he would have been canonised as a saint if only he could shed his puckish humour and laughter. "That is my only escape from sainthood" was his characteristic retort. But my quarrel with him stands. He has not yet learnt Hindi. I have sometimes also said that in one sense we have all had a good escape because of his ignorance of Hindi! If he knew Hindi well he would have long ago set fire to the country with his extremist views in politics and economics. For let there be no mistake about it, Kumarappa is a revolutionary, though thanks to Gandhiji, a non-violent revolutionary.

II

THE DHOBI EPISODE

K. G. MASHRUWALA

If men are really good, even occasional quarrels between them are helpful in making them know and love each other better. Since Kumarappa has never had any occasion to express his sentiments about me, I do not know how far he has loved me more for having occasionally differed from him on matters, big or small. My regard for him, however, has only grown each time he has had a rub with me.

The first and rather a major rub between us took place in 1933 in the Nasik Road Central Prison. We were political prisoners living in adjoining cells. To enable me to have a hot water bath, the Superintendent had permitted me to go to the hospital yard every morning where I could get that facility. One of the wards of the hospital was set apart for political prisoners and I had to go to the bath room of that ward for the purpose. Some of our co-prisoners were patients in that ward, and I had a natural access to them. One of them was Shri

Joachim Alva who later became a prominent advocate and Congress-man of Bombay and once its Sheriff.

One morning Shri Alva narrated to me an incident which had taken place in the hospital yard on the previous evening shortly after the prisoners were locked up for the night. The incident had taken place somewhat near the gate of the yard. He had seen it through the grating of the door of his ward. Another prisoner had also witnessed it, but as he had sore eyes he could see what happened only dimly. So he was unwilling to assert anything positively.

The background of the incident was as follows:

One of the regular warders (Havaldar) had lost his bunch of keys. Losing keys is a serious affair in a jail, and the warder was liable to severe punishment for the negligence. Two convicts, who were doing laundry work in the hospital, were suspected of having committed the theft.

The matter was brought to the notice of the two assistant Doctors of the hospital by the warder with a good deal of entreaty to save him from punishment. The Doctors conveyed the matter to the Jailor along with their endorsement on the warder's prayer. The matter could be hushed up if the keys were recovered without loss of time. So all wheels began to work in that direction.

Now follows what was actually witnessed by Shri Joachim Alva:—

A long rope or cot-tape (Nawar), I forget which, was tied to the branch of a big tree. Two regular warders and two convict warders brought the two suspected dhobies to the tree, the two Doctors also being present. The legs of the suspects were tied and they were hung from the tree heads down and the warders began to strike them with their batons so that their bodies swung like pendulums.

This went on for a few minutes, but it seems that the dhobis could not be made to confess their supposed offence. Eventually they were released and taken away to their cells.

After the affair was over and everything was quiet, the Jailor made his usual round and found "All Well" at the hospital!

Naturally Shri Alva was shocked at this sight, and had a sleepless night. As soon as I went to the hospital for my bath the next morning, he immediately related the matter to me and sought my advice. I advised him to see the Superintendent and report the matter to him direct without loss of time. Shri Alva, in accordance with the jail practice, sent a slate-note to the Jailor asking him to arrange for an urgent interview with the Superintendent.

On my return to my own ward I naturally related the incident to all our comrades and there was excitement all round.

The Jailor got the slate but he put it under all other slates. It was not acted upon by him during the whole day. He excused himself later on by saying that as it was at the bottom of the heap he could not reach it till the evening.

Undoubtedly he had read the slate immediately and guessed what the purpose of the interview would be. He informed the Doctors about it. All of them realized the seriousness of the situation. They had been guilty. Only a few months ago two of the Jailors of that very prison had been punished for belabouring a political prisoner and sentenced to 9 and 6 months rigorous imprisonment respectively. They became nervous. The Jailor himself became apprehensive about his own position. He advised the Doctors to approach Shri Kher, Shri Morarji Desai and me and to entreat us to bring about a reconciliation. The Doctors came and wept and entreated us to save them. They offered to perform any penance which we might prescribe. The Doctors had a clean record till then and were generally popular among ordinary convicts for their kindness. They were not permanent jail officials.

It was a difficult point to decide. The choice had to be made between allowing the law to take its own course by asking Shri Alva to persist in his complaint and obtaining proper amends from the guilty persons through our personal efforts. After a

good deal of deliberation the amends proposed by us were accepted by the offenders. These were that the two Doctors, the two regular warders and the two convict warders should, jointly and individually, in the presence of ourselves, Shri Alva and the hospital staff apologize to the two belaboured prisoners, and not victimise them later in any way. The proposal was made subject to the concurrence of Shri Alva, who was after all the person to decide which course he should pursue.

We thought that this was a better course than going by the administrative channel. We had some experience of how things were manoeuevred in official enquiries. For practical purposes Shri Alva was the only eye-witness; his evidence could be made to look unreliable in several ways. It was not impossible for the authorities to manage things in such a way that the belaboured prisoners themselves might deny having been illtreated. The whole incident might be made to look like a story invented by Shri Alva. And then, far from punishing the offenders, Shri Alva himself might be proceeded against for having lodged a false complaint. But even if Shri Alva succeeded to some extent, the investigation was bound to be so managed that the Doctors might be let off with a warning, the warders might be punished and the convict warders given the severest punishment. The two dhobis might be persecuted in various ways till the end of their entence.

Shri Alva became agreeable to the private punishment provided the aggrieved prisoners were satisfied with it. So the dhobis were asked to make their choice. They were naturally more pleased with this arrangement than that for official investigation. To have Doctors and warders stand before them with folded hands and ask their pardon would be the achievement of a life-time for them.

So Shri Kher, Shri Morarjibhai and I felt that we could take this course with a clean conscience. It was put into execution without loss of time and we returned to our ward with a sense of relief. We had no doubt that most of our companions, if not all, would approve of our action.

But we had made a mistake there. Shri Kumarappa and several youthful companions like Shris Masani, Mascarenhas and others were angry beyond measure. The elderly ones approved of our action. The whole ward was thrown into a state of excitement. We lost caste with several. Shri Kumarappa declared that he would not allow this unholy performance to go unchallenged.

And as luck would have it, he got his chance immediately. The District Magistrate of Nasik paid an unexpected visit to the jail that very day and came to our ward with the Superintendent. As soon as they reached Kumarappa's cell he told the Magistrate, "I have a complaint to make. I am reliably informed that two prisoners were belaboured by jail officials in the hospital yard the day before yesterday evening. I ask you to investigate into the matter." The District Magistrate asked the Superintendent to take note and assured Kumarappa that he would look into the matter.

Kumarappa thus successfully killed the reconciliation, the apology with folded hands of the culprits not with-standing. It was a sad day for Shri Kher, Shri Morarji and myself. If I remembar well, all the three of us fasted that day. I wept. Nor, do I think Kumarappa was quite happy, though he too had a clean conscience on the matter. In the afternoon he showed me a text from the Bible in support of his action. I showed him a text from Kahlil Gibran's Prophet in support of my attitude. But we had not based our decisions on this or that text. The decisions had come out of our own different approaches to the matter. We did not look at the matter in a personal way and so our relations were not strained in any way.

With regard to the incident itself, every thing happened as apprehended by us. The Superintendent made the investigation. None of us three were examined. I have not seen the report. But the ultimate results were reported as follows. Shri Alva was found to have been keeping full diaries of his jail experiences. They were searched. There were strictures in them which made the Superintendent and the Jailor and several others his bitter enemies.

The dairies were written in the manner of journalists. His evidence was adjudged as thoroughly unreliable and it was decided that from his own diaries he had shown himself guilty of several breaches of jail rules. He was reduced from class B to class C and all his privileges were cancelled. That was result No. 1.

The two Doctors alleged alibi, and their presence was held to be 'not proved'! But the incident having taken place in the yard under their charge, they were "warned". This was result No. 2.

The convict warders, who had taken part in belabouring the dhobis, were deprived of their positions and punished according to Jail Rules. Result No. 3.

The two regular warder were reduced in rank for 6 months, and one of them fined for losing the keys. Result No. 4.

The two dhobis were not proved guilty of making away with the keys, but they had created all this trouble ! So their behaviour was watched and opportunities were soon found to reduce their remission periods and to put them to harder work. Result No. 5.

I felt that, had it not been for my visit to the hospital yard for hot water bath, all this might not have happened. So I voluntarily decided not to leave my ward for baths and to manage with cold water and bathing in the open, disregardful of consequences. The consequences were not unexpected. I fell ill afer a few days and had to be removed to the hospital. As soon as I was better I was discharged only to be taken back again after a few days. This happened twice or thrice and then the Superintendent realized that I must be kept in the hospital till the end of my sentence. This was a punishment to me in a way. For, in the hospital there was not much company.

Thus ended the chapter of the dhobi episode in the Kumara Purana.

Kumarappa became dearer to me than ever before. My affection for him has always increased ever since, though our opinions are sometimes dissimilar. Perhaps he is unrepentant about

his part in the dhobi episode, as I am about mine. I appreciate his view-point. Since we never discussed this matter again, I do not know whether he appreciates mine. He might well tell me,

" कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन "

It was my duty to act as a good citizen ought to, irrespective of the consequences. Justice was miscarried, not because Kumarappa lodged his complaint but because of dishonest officials. If the officials had been truthful, there need not have been any miscarriage of justice. I had no business to presume that the officials would not behave honestly. So *prima facie* Kumarappa was right. And yet I feel that Shri Kher, Shri Morarjibhai and Shri Alva and I had judged the situation correctly and our conduct was justified by previous experience and actual results. The fact of the matter is, it is difficult to dogmatise, what the true principle of action ought to be in such a case. The wisest judgement might well be, "Much can be said on both sides".

III

KUMARAPPA THE CHRISTIAN

S. K. GEORGE

A great Christian teacher of modern times has said that "the true understanding of Jesus is the understanding of will acting on will. The true relation to him is to be taken possession of by him."[1] It is to those who thus surrender their wills to him that the Man of Nazareth reveals himself afresh in every generation, setting them to the tasks that he has for them to fulfil. Judged by this test Kumarappa is a great Indian Christian, one who is both *a Christian and an Indian*, a combination none too frequent among those who profess and call themselves Christians in this land.

Kumarappa imbibed his Christianity at his mother's knee. His mother, to whom he has dedicated his book on the *Practice and Precepts of Jesus*, was a great exponent of practical Christianity. "Her piety, her sympathy for and love of her neighbours she expressed by her attempt, however humble it may have

1. Albert Schweitzer : *My Life and Thought p. 71*

been, to help those in distress."[2] From their earliest years sympathy for those in need was inculcated in her children and when they had grown up, and were earning for themselves, she levied on them a liberal tax to support her wide-ranging charities, which extended from the orphan child in a neighbouring house to the victims of famine in distant China. "Her life and actions made an impression on my child-mind much greater than many volumes of theology could have done."[3]

Though no student of Christian theology, Kumarappa in all his writings shows a wide and intimate knowledge of the Bible. His writings are strewn with innumerable apt quotations from the Bible. Not even the Metropolitan of India could get away with his own interpretation of any Biblical passage in arguments with J. C. Kumarappa. For every verse flung at him Kumarappa can fling back two, equally pertinent and more pate-breaking. Such, for example, is his turning the tables on those who argue for Christian acquiescence in whatever Government may be set over them, on the authority of Jesus' saying: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's". "If God", argues Kumarappa, "has made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, where does the poor worm of a Caesar get a look in? All things (including Caesar himself) belong to God and so have to be rendered to Him and hence Caesar gets nothing."

Unkind critics might say that this and much more in this strain are instances of the Devil quoting Scripture. But Kumarappa shows rare spiritual insight in his many interpretations and applications of scriptural analogies to every-day life. A case in point is the incident he often refers to of King David pouring out as an offering to God the water which three of his valiant men had brought for him at the risk of their lives from a favourite well of his in Bethlehem which was in enemy hands at the time. King David's spiritual eye discerned that water to be the very blood of the valiant warriors, who had risked their

2. J. C. Kumarappa : *Practice and Precepts of Jesus* p. V

3. *Ibid.*

lives to satisfy his whim. If the unthinking rich among us, comments Kumarappa, have the same spiritual eye they would discern that the milk they buy from their poor neighbours is the veritable blood of the children who need that life-giving draught. Similar telling analogies and apt quotations abound in all Kumarappa's speeches and writings.

He is a typical Protestant, of the sort that Bernard Shaw has depicted his St. Joan to be. He is unafraid of setting his individual judgment, guided by the spirit of Truth, as he believes, against those of Churches and Prelates. He sets forth this fundamental principle of his as one of the canons of interpretation in his study of the *Practice and Precepts of Jesus.* He rightly remarks : "Personality is more eloquent than words, and Jesus himself did not intend to confine his eternal message to the words that might have passed his lips. He promised us that the Spirit of Truth will lead us into all truth, as his disciples were not then ready to receive his whole message. Hence, to us words are not to be final, but it is the guidance of the Spirit that should matter." 4

He lays the finger on the root cause of the Church's failure to control the course of history when he attributes it to the Church's claim of finality for the revelation through Jesus. Institutions, like individuals, are so constituted that if they do not progress they, not merely stagnate, but deteriorate. That, he says, is what has happened to the Church as the custodian and interpreter of the message of Jesus. "The road to progress was blocked. The churches had usurped the place of the Spirit of Truth, but had fallen far short of the great responsibility undertaken by them by claiming to be the sole arbiter and interpreter of the master. Jesus taught us to have direct relationship with God and finally attain eternal life by union with the Father. But the churches have interposed themselves between man and God with such incompetence, followed by such dire results as we witness on the battle fields of Europe." 5.

4. *Practice and Precepts p.* 2.
5. *Practice and Precepts p.* 34

He goes on to indicate the lines on which the dynamic message of Jesus could have found, and can yet find, extension in India if it is allowed full freedom of growth. One is the extension of the principle of love, not only to the whole human race, as it was applied by Jesus as an advance on the Jewish national consciousness, but to all sentient creation. Surely this is not inconsonant with the Spirit of Jesus and is demanded in a land where the Buddhist and the Jain have carried the principle of *ahimsa* to cover life in all its manifestations.

Even more poignantly does he point out the need for extension of Jesus' principle of active love to cover the enemy and the wrong-doer. It is evident all through his life and utterances that his insight and sensitiveness in these matters were quickened by his contact with one to whom Jesus' example of suffering love was a basis for life-long experiment. Gandhiji's *Experiments with Truth*, his application of the principle of love overcoming evil to the problems of every day life, are by far the best commentary on the life and teachings of Jesus and throw invaluable light on the personality of Jesus. Kumarappa has done a great service to Christianity in general and Indian Christianity in particular in drawing attention through his life and writings to this great challenge of Gandhiji to traditional Christianity.

That challenge is primarily a call to apply the ethics of Jesus to the politics and economics of India and the world at large. And Kumarappa, the economist, is at his best in pointing out the implications of the Christian economy and way of life in the context of present day India. "Our land is full of the hungry, the thirsty, the down-trodden, the unclad, the sick and the oppressed. Shall we pass these by on the other side or shall we obey Jesus' command: 'Give ye them to eat'? Jesus says to us today as he did to Simon, son of Jonas, 'Lovest thou me?— Feed my lambs'. Are we ready to follow him who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed, for God was with him? This is the full implication of the theme. Put in Jesus' words it may well read: 'Sell whatsoever thou hast and give to

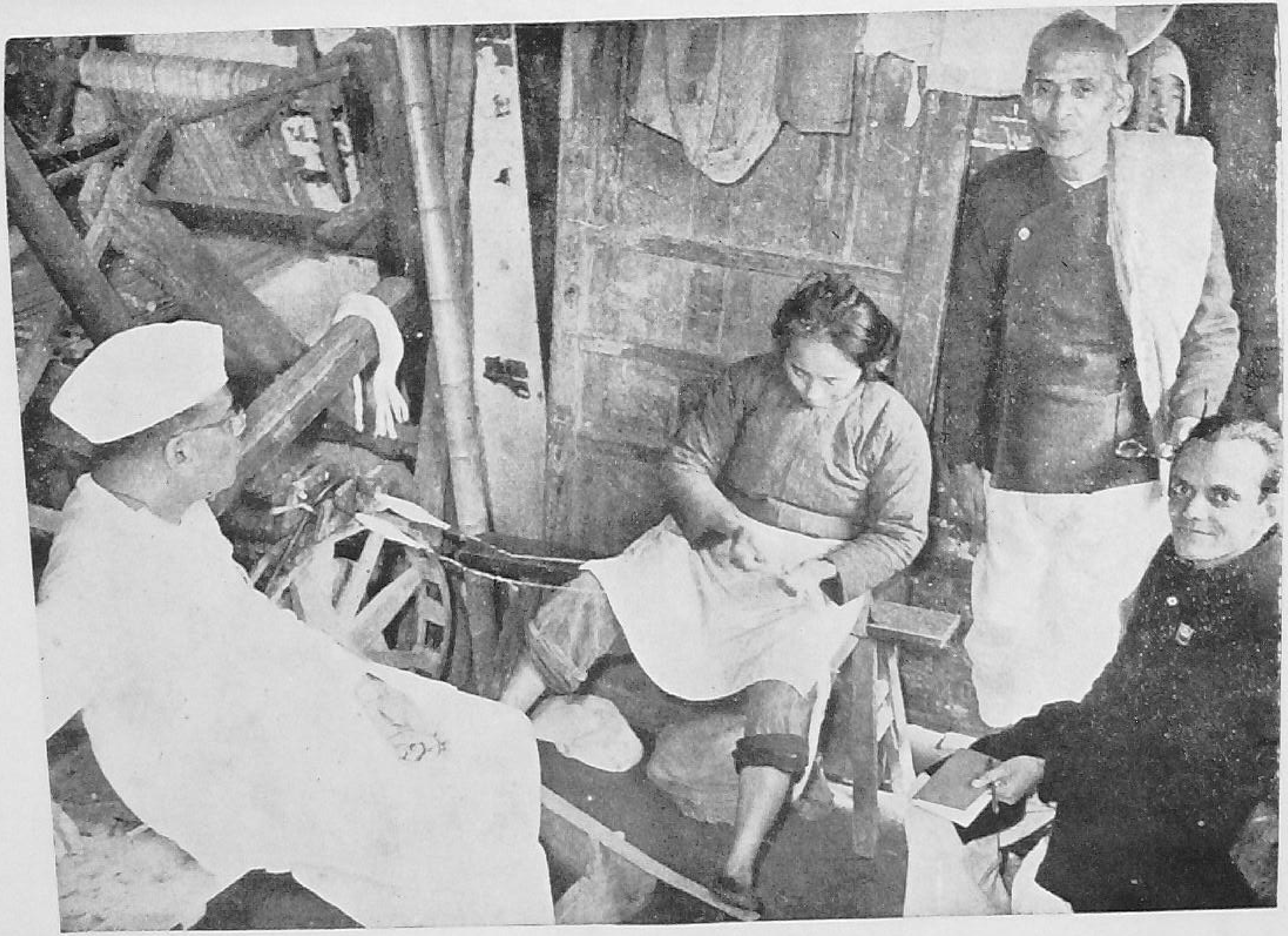
the poor and come, take up the cross and follow me'; and this is the challenge to us.".6

Coming from one who has taken up his cross and followed his Master, who has sacrificed a lucrative career to serve the lowliest and the least in the land, who today is with the tiller tilling the hard ground, in sun and in shower, it is a call that India and Indian Christianity cannot let go unheeded. And to add to the weight and worth of this interpretation of Christianity, Gandhiji has set his imprimatur on Kumarappa's *Practice and Precepts of Jesus*, by testifying from his own experience, to the truth of this interpretation of the Gospels.

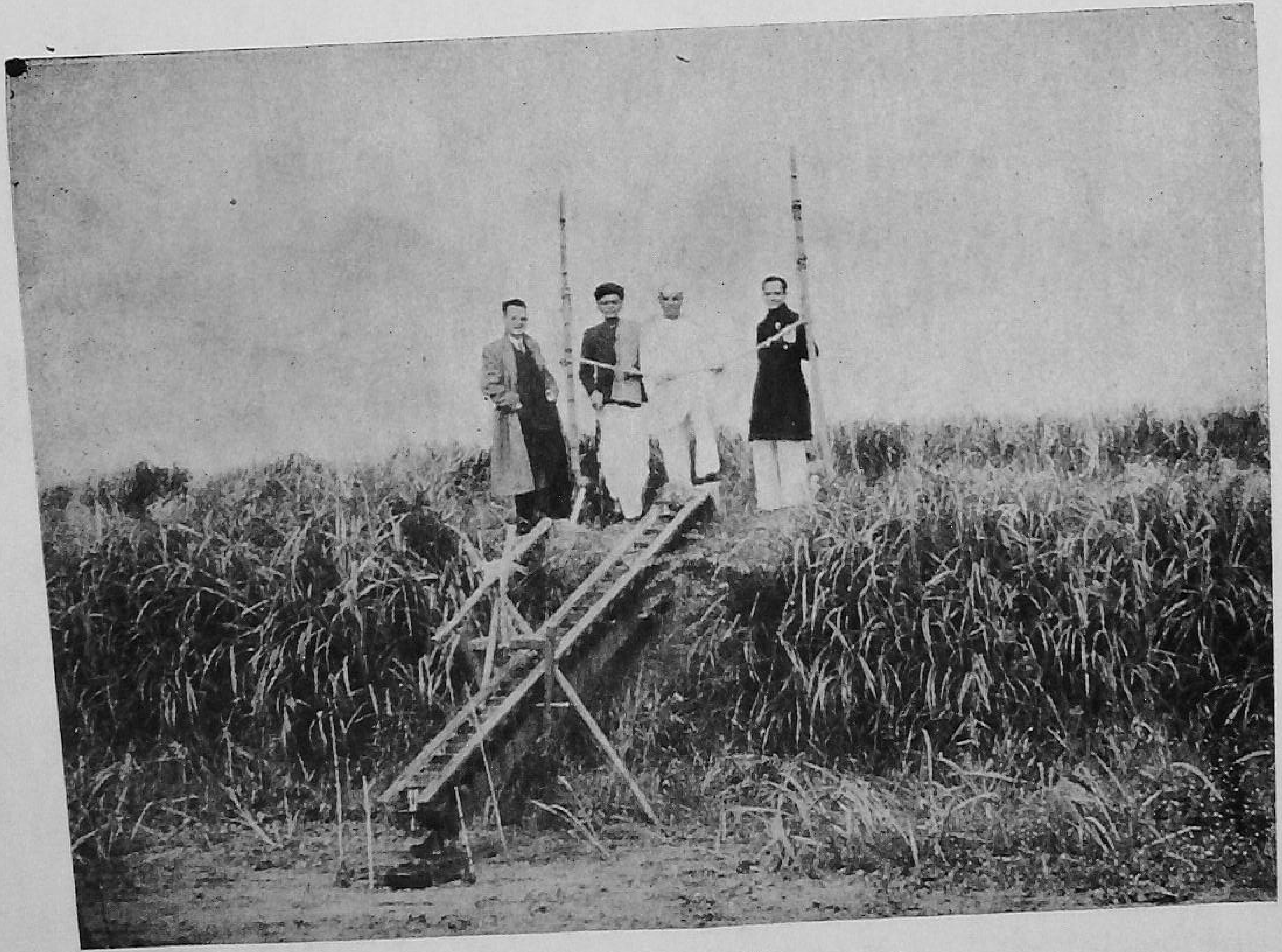
In an illuminating parable at the end of the book above referred to, Kumarappa has recapitulated and summarised his teachings. The Spirit of Truth, which lightens every man and leads humanity to ever fuller and growing truth, is compared to the compass of a ship. Just as the compass needle invariably points to the North, the Spirit of Truth perpetually guides man into the ways of God. But in addition to the compass there is a rudder also, firmly fixed to the ship. This answers to the free will of man. But just as a ship, the rudder of which is not steered in accordance with the indications of the compass, comes to disaster, the human will, when it is not guided by the Spirit of Truth, deviates from the divine course and comes to ruin. What is wrong with the Christian churches today is that they have fixed their rudders at the angle at which the early church or the Apostles had fixed theirs and cannot move them freely in keeping with the stirrings of Spirit of Truth, which like the wind bloweth where it listeth. The result is that, as vessels moving with fixed rudders, unrelated to the points of the compass, may run into each other and sink together, churches and religions are today opposing one another and bringing all religion into contempt. But the goal of all religions, as long as the Spirit of Truth pervades their atmosphere, is the same and they can all conduct the soul of man to its eternal home in God.

6 *Christianity—Its Economy and Way of Life* p. 21

Kumarappa, the Christian, has a message for all Christendom. "He speaks", as Gandhiji commented, "with confidence, born of a living faith, in the belief that the West, though nominally Christian, has not known the true Jesus of the Gospels." May not his message go unheeded!



Kumarappa in China
Examining a three spindle pedal Charkha
at Chang ka Tonga (24 th Oct. '51)



Kumarappa in China
At a Water Lift (24th Oct. '51)

Kumarappa in China
At Hanchow (26th Oct. '51)

At the "Temple of Heaven"-Peking
29th Sept. '51

KUMARAPPA IN CHINA

At the Summer Palace
Peking
29th Sept. '51

IV

A LIFE OF DEDICATION.

RAMESHWARI NEHRU

I came into personal contact with Kumarappa during one of my visits to Gandhiji at Maganvadi some time after the Gram Udyog Sangh was started. Since then more than two decades have passed and we have had frequent and intimate opportunities to meet and know each other. Every time I meet him he stimulates me, and my respect and admiration for him have grown with the passing of years.

Kumarappa has an inspiring personality and his life, dedicated as it is, to the service of humanity, bears the impress of his nobility. Born in a well-to-do family he received the highest education in certain subjects in England and in America. He made a deep study of economics and sociology and he developed an amazing insight into the problems of the villagers and their environment. He has used his knowledge and training in the West to great advantage in finding solutions to the difficult questions concerning Indian economics. He has written much and whatever he

has written makes clear and stimulating reading. He is not only a clear thinker but a practical experimenter. He looks at everything from the Indin villagers' point of view and is convinced that, any plan or scheme, which does not help in solving the difficulties of eighty per cent of the toiling masses of the country who live in the villages, is not worth a second thought. Very often, therefore, his criticism is sharp like the edge of a razor and his attitude in Committees and Conferences is totally uncompromising. That is why in certain quarters he is dubbed as a person with a 'one-tract mind' and as an impractical theorist. But inspite of all his extreme views even his critics admit the absolute truthfulness, sincerity and forcefulness of his arguments. Gandhian economics, as clearly and vigorously expounded by him, may not find general acceptance to-day but it is a challenge which all our economists must reckon with.

When Congress Governments were first set up in the various Provinces he was invited by five or six of them to make plans for the development of agriculture and village industries. The surveys he made and the reports he drew up still hold the field and will do so for a long time to come in regard to these subjects. His faith is in the self-sufficiency of the villages as the basis of a peaceful and just democracy in India. If the villagers have a balanced diet, clothes to wear and houses to live in and are above all wide awake in mind, then it will not be the towns but the villages which will rule and shape India. And India so ruled and shaped would be a great India which will be an example to the world in setting up a truly non-violent social order. He is, therefore, a ceaseless advocate of village reconstruction. In his book entitled ' An Overall Plan for Rural Development," he has given a detailed and at the same time comprehensive plan for national reconstruction in India.

To demonstrate the practicability of his plans, Kumarappa has now left the All India Village Industries Association, which he built up during the last sixteen years, to settle down in the village of Seldoh, twenty miles from Wardha. With Seldoh

as his new-life centre, he will work in a rural area to accomplish self-sufficiency in regard to the primary wants of life in that area. All Constructive Workers will look to this experiment for inspiration. Kumarappa is bound to succeed in this experiment and when he does it will be a monument of his constructive genius and an example to the whole country.

Kumarappa has a living faith in non-violence and holds that the Gandhian way of life is for all. It will be difficult to find another person in India to-day who has done greater credit to Mahatma Gandhi's life and work than Kumarappa. He has given to Gandhiji's philosophy a body and a soul through his own work for village industries and village reconstruction. He built up the Gram Udyog Sangh from scratch. But for Kumarappa we would not have had a clear and scientific exposition of Gandhian economics. Kumarappa has written many books on the subject and these are now available in more than one Indian language. He could have amassed wealth if he had persisted in his work as a Chartered Accountant. For some time he did live the life of a wealthy and Europeanised person in Bombay. But when he came in contact with Gandhiji he gave up everything and accepted a life of poverty and complete simplicity. This change, which came over him, was amazing. Whenever I visit his tiny, neat and beautiful little hut in Maganwadi, I get a feeling of joy and peace. It is a one-room hut in which everything is arranged with taste and care. It is the modern verison of the parna-kuti of the old Rishis of India,

Kumarappa as a true Christian found in Gandhiji the living embodiment of "The Sermon on the Mount." He, therefore, readily followed Gandhiji. He saw clearly that the seeds of conflict and war were inherent in the economics of Europe and America. He, therefore, turned away from the example of those countries to the light that came from Gandhiji. A just and peaceful democracy he decided, could come only from decentralization of economic and political power and resources. Not centralization, but decentralization became for him the watch-word for the future. The rediscovery of

the charkha and village industries, the revivial of village panchayats and the programme of maximum self-sufficiency on a regional basis became the main planks of his programme. To this he has now added a just redistribution of land as of basic importance. He has given himself truthfully and unreservedly to the mission he has inherited from Gandhiji. We all owe a deep debt of gratitude to him. He has set his hands to a great task. May God give him the life and the strength to fulfil his mission.

V

KUMARAPPA: AN EVALUATION

R. R. Keithahn

Gandhiji drew us all to him as the sun draws up thousands of drops of invisible water to the skies. I marvel still at the power of that small bundle of human Truth. A large number of his followers found their satisfaction in the immediate programme for political Swaraj which Gandhiji offered them from time to time. Most people were occupied with the normal responsibilities of life. They could get away now and then for a "fight". Time could be found to go to jail. Perhaps also they were attracted by the sensational nature of the struggle which promised quick results. Most would be too impatient to be "Constructive Workers".

I was growingly drawn to Kumarappa and his Village Industries programme. I became a regular Khadi wearer as soon as I understood Gandhiji's unique programme and the important place of homespun therein. Very early I grew very fond of this product of the unemployed or under-employed. It fitted in with my already accepted economic programme of using the product of a just and

honest economic effort. The pure white of Khadi was always attractive to me. It is the symbol of the purity of life in all its aspects. There was no question of the importance of Khadi. But I felt, all genuine village industries, especially those of food processing, were equally important. In fact, as I have always said, one could go naked in such a tropical climate as that of India and millions practically do so. But one could not live on an empty stomach. In fact, it was my wife who joined me and came to India in 1935, who helped to see things more clearly. After two years of medical practice at Devakottai she said, "India does not need pills or injections; India needs food", or "How can you expect the hungry villager to live a good life on an empty stomach ?"

Naturally I was also interested in the welfare of the exploited and of the Harijans in particular. At Devakottai I gave special attention to the Harijan-Nattar problem. Later in Bangalore I had the privilege of being responsible for a Harijan Hostel. That interest continues to this day. However, I agreed with Gandhiji that this was primarily a caste-Hindu problem. And so, naturally I did not think of giving my whole time to such work.

So it was with all of the other aspects of the "Constructive Programme". As yet, Basic Education had not been started. Thus it was natural for me to become an "agent" of the All India Village Industries Association. Although I cannot say that I made any special contribution to this work, yet I must say that I was very happy in working with Kumarappa and in being associated with his significant efforts. I always felt that he got down to fundamentals and that he was an effective and independent thinker and worker. As an "agent", several times, I had the privilege of helping to bring together the rural workers of South India. This is an aspect of Kumarappa's contribution that I feel is most important.

He is always the helpful and creative friend. How often he responded to our call and went from place to place in South India! He gave to us that sympathetic fellowship that alone can help a worker to do his best. His was not an easy

task. He was not always accepted. I remember that during one of these tour programmes, which I helped to arrange, he was not permitted to speak in one of the Christian buildings of Tirunelveli District. But he always surmounted such obstacles in his normal stride. There were plenty of people who would accept him and he knew where he stood. He was convinced that his cause was right and that was its ultimate strength.

As he went about, he took his box of literature with him. We did not need to depend merely upon his spoken word and personal fellowship but we had his books to read after he had gone away. He was again pioneering in steps in which the rest of us would follow sooner or later.

One might claim that Kumarappa had the Sarvodaya outlook, that he did Samagra Gram Seva right from the beginning. He wore Khadi and believed in it fully. He believed whole-heartedly in the Harijan work. His Village Industries programme was not mere vocational activity. It was a revolutionary programme. My memory tells me that, he never entered the political fray as such, but every time the political situation became tense, the British thought of him in terms of a real political enemy because, his economic programme had fundamental political implications. And so he went to prison along with other Satyagrahis.

Thus it has not been surprising that Kumarappa has been one of the most stimulating "Constructive Work" leaders since the death of Gandhiji. Had we known him well we would have anticipated that he would be one of the sharpest critics of India's own government. Even before the death of Gandhiji he saw our weakness and pressed for a unity of outlook and programme. It has been a rare privilege to be a member of the Sarva Seva Sangh, and there I am thrilled to see how "Kumarappa" is always one of those who takes us on to new and logical further steps in the "Constructive Programme".

It has been he who quickly understood the importance of agricultural work as such and has made each one of us

more sensitive to this fundamental aspect of India's life. Only four years ago, I visited a very important "Constructive Work" Centre of South India. It has done and is doing good work. I admire the workers. But I was astounded to see that there was nothing which could be called a garden or field. The land and water resources were completely unused. Within these four years, I suppose, there are few "Constructive Workers" who are not sensitive to our responsibilities for the use of the land and water which may be in our hands.

And so Kumarappa was very soon taking his place with others in bringing home to us the wretched and most difficult conditions of landless agricultural labour. He has helped to make us all the more sensitive to the problem of land tenure in India. I believe that others are recording his important contribution in South India at this point. He has come several times, sat with us in our needy villages, and has given to us not only light, vision and courage but also practical suggestions as to how we might get on with this important work.

Thus we see how Kumarappa has been an effective pioneer right from the beginning He maintains that spirit even though he has physical handicaps. I was thrilled when we sat in a meeting of the Sarva Seva Sangh at Wardha and one of our good workers said that he felt he was "too old" to return to the village to start an agricultural effort under the auspices of the Sarva Seva Sangh, and Kumarappa at once suggested that he be relieved of the responsibilities of Maganvadi and he would himself go to nearby village and start an agricultural unit as a laboratory of the Wardha Institutions. As we all know he has already implemented his offer and has started the Pannai Ashram at Seldoh. He has truly gone back to the village and I am certain that, with others, he will make an outstanding contribution to our complicated agricultural problem.

It was an excellent idea to have invited Kumarappa to be a member of the recent Indian Goodwill Mission to China. I am certain that each worker has been impressed by the reports

he has sent from China. He was not afraid of the good in "Communism" and he has shown his readiness to learn even of "Capitalism" by going on to Japan to study their Cottage Industries. Evidently, in his conversation with some Communists, he was able to help them to understand the fundamental difference of the Communist and Sarvodaya approaches. He will have done the same thing in Japan. Kumarappa knows where he stands. And he is always making most of us feel very uneasy. A few years back he was in Britain speaking to the Pacifists in their National Conference. Ruthlessly he penetrated the weakness of modern Western Pacifism by saying that it took for granted an economic system that was the root of modern war. He insisted that if Western Pacifism was to become effective, it must have a revolutionary economic programme. Thus wherever Kumarappa goes he soon helps us to discover our weakness, and if we have the courage, helps us to take the next steps in our own pioneering.

This simple but earnest co-worker is always aiding us to keep close to realities. He helps us to understand how fundamental it is to work together as a team, ever remembering that our programme is really a unit, and each worker is carrying on a very small aspect of the total work. Therefore, if we are not to be hypocrites, we must be prohibition workers, naturopathy workers, Khadi-walas, Harijan Sevaks, Basic Educationists etc. all at the same time. But most of all, he is now leading us deeper into the villages and into the heart of the great business of India—that of farming. And not one of us can see the distant end. Again we sing that beautiful hymn, "Lead Kindly Light" that Light for our own day and task, that our understanding may grow and that there may be a deeper appreciation of such of those who help to bring us closer to the Light, as we build a New Society of Justice and Peace.

VI

WORKER AMONG WORKERS

S. JAGANNATHAN

Shri Kumarappa has come very close, during the last four years, to many of us humble workers in the villages of South India. Before that, we had only known him from a distance. In these years, he became completely one of us. This was all the more strange because, workers were generally a little afraid of him on account of his sharp tongue and cut and dry methods. It was a great cause that brought us together, and once we came within the circle of common work and understanding, all barriers melted away and we discovered him to be a wonderful and lovable comrade. It is of the great cause I must speak now.

The more some of us, workers, went into the villages and studied the problems of village life, the more we realized that the basic problem was that of landless agricultural labour. Those who actually worked on the land owned little or no land. They constituted a big mass of toiling and suffering people, who were driven constantly from pillar to post by those exploiting their

labour. The number of such people will be many millions in our country and their discontent and growing restlessness point the way to a great danger ahead for the country. We became conscious of this problem and began to work at it in our own humble way. And then, we suddenly found out that, this was a most difficult and dangerous work. Difficult, because of the vast number of people involved and without any organization or unity. Dangerous, because of the many vested interests bent on keeping these toiling and suffering people where they were. We were, therefore, warned even by other Constructive Workers not to meddle in this matter. It was too big a problem and we were not competent to deal with it. But how could we accept such a position ? The work appeared to us very important and it affected the entire economic situation in the villages. It was impossible to ignore the problem. We also felt that Gandhiji would never have advised us to run away from this work. So in our own humble and blundering way we went on with the work. It mainly consisted in studying conflicts as they arose between land owners and agricultural labourers and in attempting to find a peaceful solution. The land owners were hard on the terms they offered and the labourers unyielding in their minimum demands. We were sometimes successful and often unsuccessful. We had no leader and we had not enough guidance. We wondered why none of the great leaders of Constructive Work took up this problem. Was it beyond the beaten tracks of their own programmes? We said to ourselves that some day God will give us a leader and He did. It happened sooner than we had expected. Shri Kumarappa was then studying the agrarian problem as the Chairman of the Agrarian Reforms Committee appointed by the Congress. He had gone to every part of India and had studied this very problem. It looked as though he was himself seeking for a group of workers who would take up this work. And so we found the leader we were seeking and he found the workers he needed. We invited him to come and help us and he came at once. From the very start he said to us, "This is a work of fundamental importance. I am with you in this work. Let

us work together." That was how the workers of the Tamilnad Constructive Workers Sangham and Shri Kumarappa came together in this work.

Since then he has responded to every call we gave him. He came to Tamilnad again and again. He came with us to remote and inaccessible villages. He stayed and worked with us in the four training camps which we conducted in village parts. The camps were for training village youth right in the villages and surrounded by their daily problems. This was not institutional training but village training for village work of village youth. Shri Kumarappa would talk and discuss with the workers for hours together. Life in these camps was hard and without conveniences. There would be a patched up roof over the head and beaten down earth for floor. Food was village food which every peasant eats. Shri Kumarappa lived right with us and would touch no extra food. He was once with us at the training camp in Kallandri, 12 miles from Madhurai. One day he had to go to Tuticorin. The car, which was to take him, broke down about a mile from the camp and absolutely refused to start in spite of all the pushing and coaxing and tinkering with the engine. We were much worried because he had to catch a train. Shri Kumarappa found out what had happened and went over to a group of shepherd boys and started a lively conversation with them, enquiring in detail about the life of the peasants in the locality. For lunch, he gladly took the boiled grams and ground-nuts sold by an old village woman sitting on the way side. Very often we could not give him any good food or at the proper time. Shri Kumarappa, as every one knows, suffers from blood pressure. He needed rest and slept at fixed hours. But one night we accommodated him in an impossible rest-house in the Tirunelveli District. The noise of traffic, the mosquitoes and the dust made it impossible for him to sleep. One of us went up to him and enquired solicitously how he was faring. He quietly said that because he could not sleep he had settled down to thinking! On another occasion he had to live a whole week close to a village cemetery.

The rites and lamentations of burial and the smell of cremation filled the air. He got no sleep during those nights. He said again that he simply laid down and allowed his mind to think out the problems facing the villagers. That was his way, if you cannot sleep, just lie down and think and may be you will get some sleep! After such nights he would be fresh as ever for the work in the training camp. If he did not get his food at the proper time he simply missed a meal and he would say, "seeds sown out of season will yield no harvest and food eaten out of time would do no good".

The landlords of the Madhurai District wrote to the Government, "The proposals of the Kumarappa party could be carried out only if Communist principles are accepted for India. We have discussed with the Kumarappa party. They are for Communist principles and so it was not proper for them to propagate such policies." This is how vested interests tried to paint every demand for justice as Communism. It would be a sad day for our country if justice and Communism become the same thing in the minds of the people. Shri Kumarappa is a votary of non-violence and a true follower of Gandhiji. He is thus a non-violent revolutionary. His message everywhere was, that land, like air and water, should be common property of the people and that only those who work on the land should own the land. When such words came from the mouth of one of Gandhiji's closest followers, the people listened. The land owners and even the Madras Government became angry with him. There were even rumours that the Government might put a ban on his activities. It would have been an astounding thing indeed, if a Congress Government had compelled Shri Kumarappa to court imprisonment. The political freedom of India will remain a mockery if we are not able to give land to those who cultivate it best.

Some of us have resolved to give our lives to this work of bringing justice to the toilers on the land who own no land and who get inadequate wages. We shall go on with our work slowly and steadily. We will never give it up. We keep our faith

in Shri Kumarappa, our leader, that he will guide us successfully in the work ahead. We shall follow him.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

(In the order of Contributions)

1. Mrs. E. S. Appasamy : Elder sister of Shri J. C. Kumarappa and founder of the Vidyodaya Girls' School in Tyagarayanagar, Madras.
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6. Srikrishnadas Jaju : Ex-President of the All India Village Industries Association, Ex-Secretary of the All India Spinners' Association and a close associate of Gandhi in Constructive Work. Wardha.
7. S. R. Venkataraman : Member of the Servants of India Society and Secretary of the Madras City Harijan Sevak Sangh, Madras.
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11. Amritlal T. Nanavati : Secretary of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha.
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